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LONGMANS' ENGLISH CLASSICS

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THOMAS CARLYLE

ESSAY ON BURNS

Longmans' English Classics

CARLYLE'S

ESSAY ON BURNS

WITH

SELECTIONS FROM BURNS'S POEMS

EDITED

WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION

BY

WILSON FARRAND, A.M.

HEADMASTER OF THE NEWARK ACADEMY

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

NEW YORK CHICAGO BOSTON TORONTO

CARLYLE
BURNS
LEC

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First Edition September 1896
Reprinted August and November 1897
July and November 1898, May 1899, June 1900
August 1902, July and October 1903, November 1904
August 1908, June 1909, May 1915, May 1916, May 1919
December 1921, May 1926, February 1928

PREFACE

This edition has been prepared with a view to careful study, as it is evident that a book thus prepared will serve equally well for more cursory reading. The concluding portion of Carlyle's lecture on "The Hero as Man of Letters"—the fifth in the course on "Heroes and Hero Worship," delivered in London, in 1840—is appended as affording an interesting comparison with the earlier and more elaborate essay on the same subject. As this passage is intended, however, only for supplementary reading, and not for study, it has not been annotated. In the "Essay on Burns" Carlyle makes many quotations from various sources. As it is difficult, if not impossible, to trace many of these quotations, and as a knowledge of their origin is of no value whatever as an aid to the understanding of the essay, no attempt has been made to treat them fully in the notes.

The thought of the editor throughout has been that the primary aim in the study of this essay should be to introduce the student to Carlyle and his works; but it has also been borne constantly in mind that this study will fall far short of its purpose if it fails to awaken also an interest in the life and songs of Robert Burns.

W. F.

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INTRODUCTION

I. Thomas Carlyle.

Thomas Carlyle, the author of the "Essay on Burns," is one of the most striking figures in the literary life of the nineteenth century. He described himself as "a writer of books," and it was to this end, the writing of books, that he devoted his life. His life was quiet and retired, and, to a considerable extent, was passed even in obscurity. His personality, however, made a marked impression on all whom he met, and this, coupled with the interest roused by the intense individuality of his writings, has brought it about that the details of his life and character are better known than those of almost any other author of recent times. With some writers, it is quite sufficient to know them only from their works, but with Carlyle the case is different. He was so impetuous, so intense, so unconventional in thought and feeling, and these traits are so clearly reflected in his writing, that it is almost impossible to appreciate his works rightly without some knowledge of the man.

He was born in the little village of Ecclefechan, in the county of Dumfries, Scotland, on the 4th of December, 1795. His father was a mason, and had built with his own hands the house in which his famous son was born. He was a man highly respected for his stern uprightness and thoroughness of work, while he evidently possessed a character far above the ordinary in strength. Carlyle says of him: "More remarkable man than my father I have never

met in my journey through life; sterling sincerity in thought, word, and deed; most quiet, but capable of blazing into whirlwinds when needful; and such a flash of just insight and brief natural eloquence and emphasis, true to every feature of it, as I have never known in any other." It is easy to see where Carlyle obtained some of his traits. His mother also was a woman of great force of character, although neither she nor her husband possessed the culture derived from books.

Thomas was taught to read by his mother at a very early age. At five his father began to teach him arithmetic and sent him to the village school. At seven, an Inspector of schools reported him to be "complete in English." Latin he studied with the village minister, and at the age of ten he was sent to the grammar school at Annan. After four years here it was decided that he should enter the University of Edinburgh, and, accordingly, when not yet fourteen, he walked the eighty miles from Ecclefechan, and presented himself for admission. Comparatively little is known of his life at the university. He worked well, but apparently did more of general reading than of study. He won no prizes, although he distinguished himself in mathematics, but his intimate friends recognized his ability, and prophesied his future distinction. When he completed the course in arts in 1814, it was his intention to enter the ministry, but it was necessary to find some means of support until he was ready for ordination. Teaching seemed to offer the most available opening, and after competition, he was appointed mathematical tutor in his old school at Annan. After two years at Annan he received a similar appointment at Kirkcaldy, where he also remained two years. Carlyle did not like teaching—he was always intolerant of work prescribed—and in 1818 he concluded that "it were better to perish than to continue schoolmastering," resigned his position, and went again to Edin-

burgh. In the meantime he had definitely given up his idea of entering the ministry, and was seriously hesitating as to what career he should enter upon.

The next three years spent in Edinburgh were, perhaps, the most wretched of his life. The dyspepsia, which tortured him so in later years, had already begun to trouble him, he was harassed by doubts as to what course in life he should follow, and he eked out a precarious existence while attending law lectures and reading, by teaching private pupils and writing hack articles for Brewster's "Edinburgh Encyclopædia."

In 1822, when Carlyle was twenty-six years of age, his friend, Edward Irving, procured him a position as tutor to the children of a wealthy family named Buller, at a salary of £200 a year. This position he held for two years. In the meantime he had completed and published his "Life of Schiller" and a translation of Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship." These works brought him considerable reputation and some money. After about a year of freedom, Carlyle established himself at Hoddam Hill, a farm not far from his birthplace, leased for him by his father. His brother Alexander managed the farm, while Thomas occupied himself with writing—mostly translations from the German.

In 1826 occurred one of the most momentous events in Carlyle's career, his marriage to Miss Welsh. Few unions of literary folk have caused so much discussion and comment as this marriage, and certainly nothing has done so much, whether rightly or wrongly, to injure the estimation in which Carlyle is held. What follows may seem to give undue emphasis to Carlyle's married life, but it should be remembered that in no other way is it possible to gain so clear an insight into his character. Jane Baillie Welsh was in many repects a most remarkable woman. Sprightly, clever, and even brilliant she undoubtedly was; an only

child, to a certain extent indulged and spoiled, she was also wilful and capricious, and her cleverness not infrequently took the form of sharpness. It was a strange courtship between these two—he, rugged, persistent, dominant, uncouth; she, keen, clever, refined, discriminating; but both with their common enjoyment and love of literature. At first Carlyle seems to have "excited her ridicule even more than he attracted her esteem." Gradually, however, their friendship deepened, and at last, after five years of acquaintance, she consented to marry.

To their friends they appeared to be happily enough married, but when, after Mrs. Carlyle's death, her letters and journal were published, there was revealed a tale of unhappiness and misery that called down a flood of execration and revilement on the name of her unfortunate husband, and caused her to be glorified as a martyr to the whims of a man of genius. Time, and a realization of the fact that Mrs. Carlyle was as much given to exaggerating trifles as was her husband, have brought about a softening of this extreme view; but even at the best, the story of their married life contains much that is pitiful. There was genuine affection on both sides, but the expression of that affection was painfully absent. Carlyle was undoubtedly a difficult man to live with, and Mrs. Carlyle was most devoted in her efforts to shield him from annoyance. Always a sufferer from dyspepsia, he was very particular as to his food, and intolerant if things were not to his taste. Mrs. Carlyle learned to cook that she might make more certain of his being pleased. He was terribly sensitive to noise, and his work or his sleep was constantly being interrupted by some of the ordinary sounds of every-day life. Mrs. Carlyle, who shared this sensitiveness, was unwearied and most ingenious in her efforts to suppress or mitigate the neighboring dogs, roosters, hand-organs, parrots, and pianos. In every way she slaved and denied

herself in order to leave his life as free as possible to devote to his writing. On the other hand, Carlyle was absorbed in his work, and accepted what she did for him as a matter of course. When things did not suit him he grumbled and growled in terrific fashion; when they went well he placidly continued his work, calmly indifferent to the pleasure and happiness that might have been given by the simplest expressions of appreciation and sympathy.

But the blame was not all on one side. If Carlyle was grumpy and querulous, Mrs. Carlyle was not a silent martyr. She bore all sorts of drudgery for his sake, but not in silence. She did it, but she told of it afterward. Her feelings were as intense, and, in her way, she was as unreasonable as her husband. The ordinary accidents of domestic life were terrific in her eyes, and nothing was weakened in the telling of it. Nor did her sharp tongue spare her husband. She spoke her mind with freedom, and even was known to ridicule him to her friends before his face. Thirty years after their marriage she wrote, "I married for ambition, Carlyle has exceeded all that my wildest hopes ever imagined of him, and I am miserable." Again she wrote to a young friend, "My dear, whatever you do, never marry a man of genius."

Their married life was what might have been expected. Carlyle was a man absolutely unsuited to domestic life. His intimate friend and biographer, Froude, says of him, "Of all the men I have ever seen, Carlyle was the least patient of the common woes of humanity." His writing was a passion with him; he was wholly absorbed in it to the exclusion of everything and every one else. It has been well said that what he needed was not a wife and companion, but a housekeeper and nurse. He chose "a woman almost as ambitious as himself, whose conversation was only less brilliant than his own, loyal to death, but, according to Mr. Froude, in some respects 'as hard as flint,' with

'dangerous sparks of fire,' whose quick temper found vent in sarcasms that blistered, and words like swords . . . who found herself obliged to live sixteen miles from the nearest neighbour, to milk a cow, scour floors, and mend shoes." Small wonder that there was unhappiness in their union, and less that it was the more sensitive, less absorbed wife who suffered the most! And yet it should not be imagined that their life together was all bickering and unhappiness. Their marriage undoubtedly brought them a great deal of real happiness. Each had a genuine affection for the other. Mrs. Carlyle was proud of her husband's ability and success, and he of her brilliance and charm. Their intellectual tastes were similar, and they enjoyed a great deal of delightful companionship. But Carlyle was unsuited to married life with anyone of feeling and sensitiveness, neither was adapted to enduring the trials of ordinary life, much less of comparative poverty, and the result was a union that has become proverbial for the suffering it brought.

For eighteen months after their marriage they lived quietly at Edinburgh, Carlyle busy with his writing, and successful in having a number of articles accepted by the reviews. But these did not bring in sufficient money to support them, and in 1828 they decided to remove to Craigenputtock, a lonely little farm, sixteen miles from Dumfries, that belonged to Mrs. Carlyle by inheritance. Here, entirely removed from congenial friends, with one maid-servant and a boy, they lived for six years. For the wife the life there was terribly hard and lonely, but for Carlyle it was free from the annoyances and distractions of the town; and the six years of comparative solitude proved most important in the development of his power. Here he wrote the various articles printed in the first three volumes of his "Miscellanies," the best of which is generally acknowledged to be the "Essay on Burns." He also

wrote there "Sartor Resartus," the most unique and original, and now one of the most popular of his works. He took the manuscript of this to London, and after appealing to all the leading publishers in vain, succeeded in having it appear serially in "Fraser's Magazine." It was too strange, however, to be appreciated, and was received at first with scorn and ridicule.

It had become evident that, if Carlyle was to succeed as an author, he must be near the large libraries, and more in touch with the literary life of the day. Accordingly, in 1834, they moved to London, and settled in the little house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, which was ever afterward their home, and which is now visited every year by thousands of Carlyle's admirers. The first years in London were a continuation of the struggle for money and recognition. But in 1837 success came. In that year Carlyle delivered a course of six lectures on German Literature, which procured him great applause and considerable money. The same year was marked by the publication of the first volume of the "French Revolution." This won immediate recognition, and from that time Carlyle's position as an author was assured. The pecuniary independence of the Carlyles was further established by the death, in 1842, of Mrs. Carlyle's mother, and the inheritance of her small property. This, and the success of Carlyle's work, put an end to the long struggle with narrow means.

In 1845 he published his "Life and Letters of Oliver Cromwell," a book which sold more rapidly than any of his previous works, which caused him to be regarded as a most original historian, and which very materially modified the generally accepted opinions in regard to the great Protector. In 1858 appeared the first two volumes of his last great work, the "History of Frederick II., commonly called The Great," which was completed seven years later. This is by many regarded as his master work.

In 1865 he was elected Lord Rector by the students of Edinburgh University. This office is unlike anything that we have in this country, and is purely honorary, the only duty in connection with it being the delivery of an "Installation address." His address on the "Reading of Books," was "a perfect triumph," and may fairly be said to mark the culmination of his career.

In the midst of this success in the north came the news of Mrs. Carlyle's sudden death in London. It was a terrible blow to the old man, already weakened by age, for, in spite of his complaining and his absorption in his work, he was devotedly attached to his wife, and wonderfully dependent on her. Not until she had gone from him did he realize how much unhappiness and suffering he had caused her. "Oh!" he cried, "if I could but see her once more, were it but for five minutes, to let her know that I always loved her through all that! She never did know it, never!"

During the remaining fifteen years of his life, he wrote and published nothing of importance. He died at Chelsea, February 5, 1881. The honor of burial in Westminster Abbey was offered, but Carlyle had foreseen the possibility of this, and had decided before his death that it should not be. In accordance with his wish he was buried near his father and mother in the old kirkyard at Ecclefechan.

Carlyle appointed his intimate friend, James Anthony Froude, the historian, his literary executor, giving him full discretion as to the making public of his and his wife's letters, journals, and private papers. Froude has been bitterly condemned for the freedom and fulness with which he has revealed the inmost details of the life at Craigenputtock and at Chelsea. Probably it would have been wiser, certainly it would have shown a tenderer regard for the memory of his friend, if he had withheld much that he

has given to the public. But, on the other hand, he has given us most ample material for the study of the character of one of the most remarkable men of recent times.

Carlyle was a strange man, with much in him that we are forced to condemn, but a man whom, with all his faults, we cannot help admiring. For forty years his life was one unceasing struggle against adverse circumstances. The persistent application to work and the privations of his early years brought on the dyspepsia which tormented him until his death, and which undoubtedly was the cause of much of his irritability and complaining. Harder still to bear was the lack of recognition and of appreciation of his work. Had he been willing to cater to others' ideas, had he been willing to shape his writing to conform to popular opinion, he undoubtedly could, with his ability, have greatly eased the pecuniary strain, and earlier have won popular applause. But in spite of the obstacles, and in the face of the temptations, he never wavered in his aim, but held true to his course in spite of all. He had a mission in life, a message to deliver, and this mission he proposed to fulfil, this message to proclaim, come what might.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the man was his love of Truth, and his hatred of insincerity and sham. Truth was to him a passion. In his writing he spared neither toil nor pains to secure the facts. His mission was to proclaim Truth, and nothing must stand in the way of that. Everything savoring of hypocrisy he hated with the veriest hatred, and the exposure of a sham roused all the powers of his nature. Whatever he felt, he felt deeply, and to whatever he undertook he gave all his energy.

It is this sincerity, this intensity, this rugged strength, keeping on in spite of obstacles, that appeals to us. But with this strength there was a compensating inconsistency and weakness. Manful in enduring great ills, he was chafed and irritated by the little trials of life. The man

who could make his first thought the sparing of the feelings of a friend through whose carelessness the manuscript of the entire first volume of the "French Revolution" had been destroyed, and who could, with scarcely a murmur, take up the enormous work of rewriting it from the beginning, flew into a rage if his dinner were not properly cooked, and was inconsolable if a neighboring cock disturbed his night's rest. He did not always practise what he preached. He urged the duty of reticence, and yet no man was more outspoken about his personal troubles than he. It has been wittily said that he "preached the doctrine of Silence in thirty volumes." His sense of proportion was lacking. He fulminated as strongly against a small thing as against a great, and he was prone to exaggerate whatever was before him at the time. An earnest seeker after truth, when once he had formed an idea, he saw no other side to the question.

In his personality, too, there was the same inconsistency. His appearance was striking and impressive, but at the same time uncouth. He had a most marvellous command of language, but he retained to the last his broad Annandale accent. His conversational powers were great, but his conversation was mostly monologue. He had great charm and power of fascination, but his lack of tact often caused him to repel.

Such was Carlyle, a remarkable combination of strength and weakness, but with the strength predominating; a man to admire, rather than to love; a man of many faults and inconsistencies; whose judgment was not always sound; but of such sterling integrity, of such absolute honesty, so noble in purpose, so lofty in aim, and so persistent in his devotion to that aim, as to compel our respect, and even our reverence.

II. Carlyle's Writings and Influence.

Carlyle is not an author who appeals to all minds. His individuality is too pronounced for that. While to some he is a source of genuine delight and inspiration, others are unable to look beyond his eccentricities and contradictions. Nor is it necessarily a mark of defective literary taste that one is unable to enjoy him. Everyone, however, whether he enjoys Carlyle or not, can appreciate the rugged strength and honest vigor of the man, and every one who calls himself well-read should have some knowledge at first-hand of a writer who has exerted so profound an influence on the thought of the present day, and who has helped and inspired so many thinking men and women. If a young student desires to become acquainted with Carlyle, he can hardly do better than to begin with the "Essay on Burns." This might be followed by one or two of the other essays —say those on "History," and "Scott," or on Boswell's "Life of Johnson." Having now some acquaintance with his earlier and simpler style, and some understanding of his purpose and method of working, the student should be able to read "Heroes and Hero Worship" with enjoyment and appreciation. Next would come his two great works "Sartor Resartus" and the "French Revolution." Some students would enjoy these latter works, even before they had read the others, but it is an unquestioned fact that many who find "Sartor Resartus" very hard reading, and comparatively unintelligible, would find the same book extremely enjoyable, if before attempting it they had some acquaintance with Carlyle's style and way of thinking. That labor is not wasted that leads one to the more complete enjoyment and appreciation of a great writer.

Carlyle's writings may, perhaps, roughly be divided into three classes—critical, historical, and ethical. This divi-

sion is not strictly logical, and serious exception might be taken to the term "ethical"—all of his writings were ethical—but the arrangement is convenient and will answer our purpose.

Carlyle's critical writings consist mainly of the articles written for the Reviews in his early years, and later reprinted in the first three volumes of his "Miscellanies." By general consent that on Burns is reckoned as the best of these. Others that are notable are those on Scott, Johnson, Voltaire, Diderot, Schiller, and that on German literature. These essays began a reaction from the "slashing" style of criticism then fashionable in Great Britain. Carlyle's aim was not to write a brilliant article, not to extol one man to the skies and to crush another to the earth, not simply to estimate, to praise or to blame, but to "interpret" the author to his readers, and to lead them to a true appreciation of his spirit and his worth. His great power in this line lay in his ability to go right to the heart of a subject, and to distinguish those qualities that give lasting worth to a work from those that win merely temporary applause through conformity to the fashion of the time. The weakness of his critical work lay in his placing too great stress on the moral quality of a man's work, and not appreciating fully its æsthetic and artistic value. This is well illustrated in the "Essay on Burns," by his judgment of Keats (paragraph 21).

Carlyle's fame as a writer of history rests on three works that have already been mentioned, the "History of the French Revolution," "Life and Letters of Oliver Cromwell," and the "History of Frederick II., commonly called The Great." The "French Revolution" is generally regarded as his greatest work, although many claim this distinction for "Sartor Resartus;" and there are those who rank "Frederick the Great" above either. Carlyle's histories are unlike any others that have ever

been written. He makes no attempt to set before us all the facts in the case—he assumes that we already know them. His purpose is to make us see those facts in the right light, to teach us the lessons that he believes should be drawn from them. But he does not do this by setting down the moral in didactic form. He does it by drawing a series of vivid word-pictures of men and events that make them live and happen before our very eyes. It is here that Carlyle's marvellous descriptive power and vivid style find their fullest scope. As Lowell says, "The figures of most historians seem like dolls stuffed with bran, whose whole substance runs through any hole that criticism may tear in them; but Carlyle's are so real that if you prick them they bleed." Carlyle's histories are neither simple narrative nor comment. They consist of a series of vivid pictures of men and events, so drawn as to set before us, in unmistakable terms, what he considers to be the true view of them, and the lessons that they teach.

By Carlyle's "ethical" works are meant those concerned primarily not with literature or history, but with conduct, political, social, and personal. As has been said, the term is not exact, but it serves the purpose. His principal works dealing with political questions were "Chartism," "Past and Present," and "Latter Day Pamphlets." He makes no attempt to deal with what is sometimes called "practical politics." His aim was to point out the evils in the existing systems, and to utter a warning against the dangers of the ultra-democratic tendency of the age. In "Heroes and Hero Worship" he formulated his positive belief in the efficacy of great men in all the activities of life—that the world has always shaped its ideals and its conduct according to its heroes, and that the hope of the future is not in the power of the masses, but in the leadership of the best men. "Sartor Resartus" (literally, the tailor re-tailored) is a unique and curious presentation of

his philosophy—"his passionate commentary on a world in which he found it so hard to live in his own way, and which seemed to him so full of matter for scornful laughter and pity and indignation." It is ostensibly a "philosophy of clothes," in which the time-worn customs and institutions of society are treated as old garments, only fit to be cast off. It is perhaps the most characteristic of his works, as well as the most popular.

The attempt is sometimes made to analyze Carlyle's philosophy and to classify his opinions. Such an attempt, however, can hardly hope to be successful, for he had no "system" of philosophy, and he was neither a logical nor a consistent thinker. Certain dominant ideas, however, may be clearly traced, in his writings, and a knowledge of these may serve to throw some light on the general trend of his thought. The statement of them given here follows very closely that of Professor Minto.

Duty was his watchword. It is this that he was emphasizing, this that he was preaching from the beginning to the end of his life. "'Do the Duty which lies nearest thee,' which thou knowest to be a duty." If it were possible to sum up Carlyle's philosophy in a single sentence, it would be in some such words as these: "The chief end of life is the performance of duty." The first specific duty that he urges is the duty of work. "Produce! Produce!" he cries, "Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it in God's name." And the second great duty is that of Obedience. "Obedience is our universal duty and destiny." "Obedience is the primary duty of man." The third great duty is that of Sincerity, honesty as opposed to hypocrisy and sham. "Be true if you would be believed." "We reckon this to be a great virtue; to be, in fact, the root of most other virtues."

Just what he believed on questions of theology is difficult to discover. He could not accept the orthodox views

on many points, and would not subscribe to the accepted creeds, but he was essentially religious; that is, belief in a Divine Power, and in his personal dependence on that Power was the dominant factor of his inner life. His political opinions cannot generally be accepted. He believed that the times were all wrong. He had a growing distrust in the judgment of the multitude. Democracy was dangerous in his eyes. In his later writings he held "that with every extension of the Franchise, those whom the voters elect would be steadily inferior and more unfit."

Carlyle's style is worthy of close study. A detailed analysis will be found in Minto's "Manual of English Prose Literature," and some hints as to the study of it will be given in the Suggestions for Teachers. A word or two, however, may fitly be said here as to its excellence and its most striking characteristics. Carlyle may fairly be ranked as one of the masters of English style. In his case most emphatically the "style is the man," and the key to his style is found in knowledge of the man. His command of words was almost unrivalled, and he had the skill of a great literary artist in combining words into telling sentences. Almost equally marked was his command of figures, with which he illustrates and illumines all his writing. Perhaps his greatest power lies in the line of description, and his pictures of men and of scenery are among his most striking passages. Next to this would probably rank his power of invective. Thus Carlyle had all the skill and power of a great artist, but with it all he had a great scorn for the conventional, and an intensity of purpose that made him careless, even wilfully so, of grace and finish, and that led him to sacrifice everything to making his meaning as emphatic and as forcible as it was in his power to do. The result is a style that is by no means a model—eccentric, explosive, incoherent, but living, intense, fiery, with

a strength and vividness that have been displayed by no other man who has yet written in our English tongue.

Carlyle's influence on modern thought has been profound. He has not formulated any system of philosophy, nor is his influence due to his having set forth opinions that have commended themselves to men as wise and sound. His influence has been that of the preacher, the prophet. He has set before men high ideals, he has wakened them to a sense of the realities of life, he has roused them to higher aspirations, and inspired them to nobler living. He has not shown men what to do, but he has stirred them up to act for themselves, to do something. Our indebtedness to Carlyle is not so much for what he has achieved himself, as for what he has inspired others to achieve.

One of the best criticisms of Carlyle is that of James Russell Lowell, and this brief discussion of his writings and influence cannot be more fitly closed than with a short extract from his incisive essay:

"But, with all deductions, he remains the profoundest critic and the most dramatic imagination of modern times. Never was there a more striking example of that *ingenium perfervidum* long ago said to be characteristic of his countrymen. He is one of the natures, rare in these latter centuries, capable of rising to a white heat; but once fairly kindled, he is like a three-decker on fire, and his shotted guns go off, as the glow reaches them, alike dangerous to friend or foe. Though he seems more and more to confound material with moral success, yet there is always something wholesome in his unswerving loyalty to reality, as he understands it. History, in the true sense, he does not and cannot write, for he looks on mankind as a herd without volition, and without moral force; but such vivid pictures of events, such living conceptions of character, we find nowhere else in prose. . . .

"Though not the safest of guides in politics or practical philosophy, his value as an inspirer and awakener cannot be overestimated It is a power which belongs only to the highest order of minds, for it is none but a divine fire that can so kindle and irradiate. The debt due him from those who listened to the teachings of his prime

for revealing to them what sublime reserves of power even the humblest may find in manliness, sincerity, and self-reliance, can be paid with nothing short of reverential gratitude. As a purifier of the sources whence our intellectual inspiration is drawn, his influence has been second only to that of Wordsworth, if even to his. Indeed he has been in no fanciful sense the continuator of Wordsworth's moral teaching."

III. The Essay on Burns.

The "Essay on Burns" was written at Craigenputtock in the year 1828, when Carlyle was thirty-three years old. He had just succeeded in gaining admittance to the pages of the "Edinburgh Review," of which Francis Jeffrey, the famous critic, was at that time the editor, and one of his essays—that on the German poet Richter—had already been accepted and published. Carlyle was a great admirer and a great student of the literature of Germany, and up to this time his work had consisted mainly of translations from that language, or of criticism of German authors. This was his first public attempt to deal with the literature of his own land.

Jeffrey recognized the originality and value of the essay, but rightly considered it to be rambling and diffuse. He thought that it should be cut down at least one half, and that the language of the remainder should be polished and altered. When Carlyle received the proof-sheets, he found, as he said, "the first part cut all into shreds—the body of a quadruped with the head of a bird, a man shortened by cutting out his thighs and fixing the knee-caps on his hips." He refused to let it appear "in such a horrid shape," and, replacing the most important passages, sent the sheets back with a message that the article might be cancelled but not mutilated. And the editor allowed him to have his own way.

Jeffrey was unquestionably right. The essay is rambling

and diffuse, but at the same time it contains elements of the highest power. One of the best criticisms of the essay is that of Professor Henry Morley, who says:

"These essays on Burns and Scott are two sermons on life, often rambling, always full of repetition, saying, in Carlyle's way, what another man of equal genius and power could have said as vigorously, but more clearly and simply, therefore better, in half the number of words. But that other man of equal genius and power, wherever he may be, has not written an essay upon Burns. We must take Carlyle as he is, learn to distinguish, as Jeffrey did, between differences that are radical and those which are only formal. Carlyle's style was his own; in these essays, perhaps, only incipient Carlylese; his genius and his earnest right-minded struggle with the problems of the life of man were his own also. The readers of these essays should draw near to their writer, mind to mind, soul to soul, live with him his best life while they read the rhetoric that, always right-minded and often joined to strains of highest eloquence, sometimes confuses alike writer and reader. I doubt very much whether, after having written his essay on Burns, Carlyle clearly knew whether he had or had not meant to say that Burns should have chosen between Ellisland and Mount Parnassus. Sometimes we seem to be clearly told that he should have given himself up to the Muses and made poetry his only calling. At other times we are told that he could not be other than he was. Carlyle, on the whole, preaches with deep earnestness the truth as it is in man. A hint in the facts of any life may set him off on a new burst of homily, and though all the winds blow health, they do not all blow in the same direction."

Professor Morley is right. It is as a sermon on life rather than as a criticism of literature that the essay must be judged. And the text was one that appealed most strongly to Carlyle. There was much similarity of circumstances in the early lives of Burns and Carlyle, born as both were of humble parents in the same part of Scotland, with the same ambition to excel in literature, and the same obstacles to contend against. There was much in Burns's character, too, to call out Carlyle's sympathy and admira-

tion, and, as a Scotchman, he could appreciate to the full the national flavor in Burns's verse. All of these feelings must have come to him with peculiar force at the lonely farm of Craigenputtock, and the result is a sermon from the heart, rather than a critical analysis.

But if the essay is primarily a sermon, it is none the less a criticism of great value. Indeed, Carlyle's verdict on Burns has come to be generally accepted as the true one, and, regarded simply as a piece of criticism, the essay is ranked as a masterpiece. Goethe valued it so highly that he translated it into German, and included it in his collected works; and as Carlyle has come to be better understood and appreciated, the "Essay on Burns," with all its faults, has steadily grown in favor. It may not be one of Carlyle's greatest works, but it is a work of lasting worth; it may not be one of his most characteristic works, but it contains all of the elements of his power. It is a work that will in itself repay the most careful study, and no better could be chosen to lead one to an understanding and appreciation of the writings of Thomas Carlyle.

IV. Robert Burns.

Any attempt at an estimate of Burns's character or writings would be manifestly out of place in an introduction to Carlyle's essay. His judgment of the man and his works is so preëminently sound, and he has treated the subject with so much fulness, that any further words are unnecessary. As in his histories, however, he makes no attempt to set forth the facts, but, assuming a knowledge of them on the part of his readers, proceeds directly to make his comments and to draw his lessons. For this reason a simple statement of the important facts in Burns's life is necessary before beginning the reading or study of the essay.

Robert Burns was born on the 25th of January, 1759, in

a little clay-built cottage, the handiwork of his father, about two miles from the town of Ayr, in Ayrshire, Scotland. His father, William Burness, or Burnes, as he wrote it, was a gardener, and acted as a sort of overseer for a Mr. Ferguson. He lived on a small leased farm of seven acres, which he cultivated as a nursery garden. Robert appears to have derived his physical traits from his mother, but his mental characteristics mainly from his father. He has portrayed his father with loving reverence in "The Cotter's Saturday Night." Robert was compelled to take his share of the family labor at a very early age, but in spite of this his education was not neglected, and when five years old he began attending school. In 1766, when Robert was in his seventh year, his father, with the assistance of Mr. Ferguson, leased a larger farm, Mount Oliphant. Here William Burnes joined with four of his neighbors and engaged a young teacher, Murdoch by name, to instruct their children. Murdoch has left an interesting description of his pupil, although he seems to have regarded Robert's younger brother Gilbert as the more promising of the two. Murdoch appears to have been an unusually sensible and thorough teacher, and the young poet had a most valuable training, especially in the English language. His schooldays, however, were limited, and the most valuable part of his education was undoubtedly gained through his reading at home, where he seems to have had access to a remarkably well-selected collection of books.

After a hard struggle for success, his father was compelled to give up his farm, and to move to Lochlea, in the parish of Tarbolton. Here Burns lived from his eighteenth to his twenty-fifth year. Before this time he had begun to write verses, and some of his most popular songs were written at Lochlea. Love-making and poetry seem to have gone hand in hand with Burns; indeed, during these

years the former may be said to have been his chief occupation. When he was twenty-three a particularly serious love affair, which turned out unsuccessfully, led him to leave home for a time, and to go to the town of Irvine, with the intention of learning flax-dressing. As Carlyle intimates, this visit to Irvine was a most momentous one to Burns, for here he fell in with a set of companions who led him into habits of dissipation, and shattered the reverence and purity of mind that had formerly been his. It was the beginning of the evil that so marred his life. The venture ended disastrously. His partner cheated him, and his flax-dressing shop burned down while he was engaged in a New Year's carouse. Discouraged and disheartened, he returned to Lochlea to find affairs there in a disastrous condition, the farm a failure, and his father dying of consumption.

Just before their father's death, Gilbert and Robert had taken a lease of the little farm of Mossgiel, a few miles from Lochlea, in the parish of Mauchline, and there, early in 1784, they moved with their widowed mother and their younger brothers and sisters. Burns at that time was twenty-five years old, and he lived at Mossgiel for four years. "Three things those years and that bare moorland farm witnessed—the wreck of his hopes as a farmer, the revelation of his genius as a poet, and the frailty of his character as a man." These four years form the most important period of Burns's life. During his residence at Mossgiel, his poetical power reached its fullest development. He wrote there the poems which first established his reputation, and it is upon these same poems that his fame now chiefly rests. The justice of this claim will be seen when it is remembered that among the works produced at Mossgiel were "Halloween," "To a Mouse," "The Jolly Beggars," "The Cotter's Saturday Night," "Address to the Deil," "The Auld Farmer's Address to His

Auld Mare," "The Vision," "The Twa Dogs," and "The Mountain Daisy."

Mossgiel also witnessed Burns's collision with the clergy. The church in Scotland was divided into two parties, known as the "Auld Lights," and the "New Lights." The Auld Lights believed in the government of the churches and the selection of the ministers by the people themselves, but held very strict views of theology and of church discipline. The New Lights permitted the appointment of clergy by the lairds, and held much freer views as to doctrine and as to life. Burns's visit to Irvine greatly weakened the reverence for the church and for holy things that had been instilled in him by his father, and when he was publicly rebuked in church by an Auld Light clergyman for one of his escapades, he bitterly attacked that party in verse. His first attack on the orthodox ministers was "The Twa Herds," and this was closely followed by "Holy Willie's Prayer," "The Ordination," and "The Holy Fair." They are biting satires, displaying great wit and keenness, but from a moral standpoint it is a pity that Burns ever wrote them.

In 1786 an unfortunate entanglement made his position very uncomfortable. His affairs were in a desperate state, and he determined to emigrate to the West Indies. Money was lacking to pay his passage, and, by the advice of his friends, he published a volume of his poems. Six hundred copies were printed, three hundred and fifty of which were subscribed for in advance. From this venture he realized about twenty pounds, and immediately engaged his passage for Jamaica. Before the time for sailing, however, the recognition accorded to his poems led him to change his mind and to remain in Scotland. The first great encouragement that came to him was a letter to a friend from Dr. Blacklock, the blind poet of Edinburgh. "The Doctor belonged," said Burns, "to a set of critics for whose ap-

plause I had not dared to hope." Among those who sought the acquaintance of the new poet were Professor Dugald Stewart and Mrs. Dunlop, the latter of whom became one of his firmest friends.

In November, 1786, Burns determined to go to Edinburgh, to secure, if possible, the publication of a second edition of his poems. This visit to Edinburgh has become famous. That city was then the centre of a remarkable circle of literary celebrities, into which Burns was welcomed with the greatest enthusiasm. Nor was the welcome entirely on account of his poems, for, country-bred and rustic though he was, he charmed and delighted all with his powers of conversation, with his strength of judgment and keenness of insight, as well as with the humor and pathos of his talk. The best contemporary description of his appearance at that time is given by an intimate friend, Professor Walker:

"I was not much struck with his first appearance, as I had previously heard it described. His person, though strong and well-knit, and much superior to what might be expected in a ploughman, was still rather coarse in its outline. His stature, from want of setting up, appeared to be only of the middle size, but was rather above it. His motions were firm and decided, and though without any pretensions to grace, were at the same time so free from clownish restraint as to show that he had not always been confined to the society of his profession. His countenance was not of that elegant cast which is most frequent among the upper ranks, but it was manly and intelligent, and marked by a thoughtful gravity which shaded at times into sternness. In his large dark eye the most striking index of his genius resided. It was full of mind, and would have been singularly expressive under the management of one who could employ it with more art for the purpose of expression.

"He was plainly but properly dressed, in a style midway between the holiday costume of a farmer and that of the company with which he now associated. His black hair, without powder, at a time when it was very generally worn, was tied behind, and spread upon his forehead. Upon the whole, from his person, physiognomy, and

dress, had I met him near a seaport, and been required to guess his condition, I should have probably conjectured him to be the master of a merchant vessel of the most respectable class.

"In no part of his manner was there the slightest degree of affectation, nor could a stranger have suspected, from anything in his behaviour or conversation, that he had been for some months the favourite of all the fashionable circles of a metropolis.

"In conversation he was powerful. His conceptions and expression were of corresponding vigour, and on all subjects were as remote as possible from commonplace. Though somewhat authoritative, it was in a way which gave little offence, and was readily imputed to his inexperience in those modes of smoothing dissent and softening assertion which are important characteristics of polished manners."

One of the greatest proofs of his strength of character is the fact that his head was not completely turned by the flattery and adulation of that first winter in Edinburgh. Burns's social life in that city was not confined entirely to literary circles, and he was a frequent visitor at the taverns, where his ready wit and jovial nature made him as great a favorite as in the more select drawing-rooms. In April, 1787, the second edition of his poems appeared, and its success brought him a period of comparative prosperity. During the summer and autumn he made several short tours through Scotland, and the winter was again spent in Edinburgh. The second winter, however, was different from the first. The novelty had worn off, and, moreover, his ways and doings were better known, so that he was not received with the same cordiality as at first.

In the spring of 1788 he left Edinburgh for good, returned to Ayrshire, married Jean Armour, one of his old flames, and settled on the farm of Ellisland, about six miles from Dumfries.

His farming was not very successful, and Burns was restless and discontented during his life at Ellisland. Finding the farm an inadequate support, he secured an appointment as "gauger," a sort of under-officer in the Excise

department, which is charged with the collection of the tax on liquors and certain other articles, and the enforcement of the laws relative to their sale. This office paid him fifty pounds a year, which was a great help, and also took him about the country a great deal, which trips, on his old mare, Jenny Geddes, were very pleasant to him. If pleasant, they were also unfortunate, for they exposed him to constant temptations, which he did not resist. During this period his occupation naturally made his writing fragmentary, but he was constantly turning out poems, some of them among his best—"To Mary in Heaven," "Auld Lang Syne," "John Anderson, my Jo, John," "The Banks o' Doon," and "Tam o' Shanter."

In 1791, Burns finally gave up his farm and moved to the town of Dumfries. The temptations of the town were too much for him, and from that time his moral course was steadily downward. Soon after moving to Dumfries he began to dabble in politics, and this before long landed him in trouble. It was the time of the French Revolution, a time of revolt against settled authority. The echoes of the struggle in France were heard throughout the civilized world, and men everywhere were discussing liberty and equality. In the taverns and in the village clubs Burns was one of the most fiery speakers against autocratic governments. About that time a smuggling brig was captured in the Solway by the Excisemen, Burns being the first to board her. She was sold at auction the next day with all her arms and stores, and Burns purchased four of her guns. These he sent to the French Legislative Assembly with a letter requesting their acceptance as a mark of his sympathy. For a government officer thus openly to express his sympathy with a movement frowned upon by the government he served, was, to say the least, extremely imprudent. This was followed by speeches attacking the ministry then in power, and denouncing their

policy. It is small wonder that he received a severe rebuke from the Excise Board, and narrowly escaped losing his place altogether.

Burns's conduct, political and social, kept him in trouble in Dumfries. There are varying opinions as to the depths to which he sank, but there is no doubt that he was guilty of great excesses, and that, in all probability, his death was hastened by his manner of life. In his trouble his one great consolation was his verse, and he continued to pour out song after song, although few that could rank with his earlier efforts. In 1794 he found his health declining, and from that time he slowly failed in strength. Nearly two years later, while returning from a carouse, he became thoroughly chilled, and as a result was attacked with rheumatic fever. From this he never fully rallied. In the early summer he went to a little sea-coast place called Brow, to try the effects of sea-bathing. It was useless, and after two weeks he returned home. A few days later, on the 21st of July, 1796, he died, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

The story of Burns's life is a glorious and a sad one: glorious in its triumph over opposing circumstances, and in its achievements; sad in its neglected opportunities and in its wasted powers. In the century that has passed since his death, the world has had time to form its judgment both as to his life and as to his work. Carlyle's verdict, given seventy years ago, has been accepted as substantially just and fair. To judge of the correctness of that verdict we need simply the bare facts of his life and the words of his songs. One thing is certain: whatever may be the truth as to the right and wrong in his life, he was a true poet, and his songs have found their way to the hearts of men wherever the English tongue is spoken.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

No exact method of teaching any subject can wisely be prescribed. The method must vary with the individual teacher, and there may be as many methods as there are teachers. Particularly is this true of the teaching of English, where, if anywhere, spontaneity and freedom are essential. Two things are necessary—a clear knowledge of the end to be attained, and enthusiasm; for without a definite aim the work will be vague and formless, while without enthusiasm it will be dry and formal.

Although no detailed method of teaching may wisely be laid down, suggestions may be extremely valuable. Such suggestions are particularly desirable at the present time in connection with the teaching of English. The study of English classics is no new thing, but the systematic study of such works in the secondary schools in accordance with the prescription of the conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English is new, and there is as yet no general agreement as to the methods that are likely to produce the best results in such study. For this reason, somewhat detailed directions for the study of Carlyle's "Essay on Burns" are given, without any idea, however, that these directions can, with advantage, be followed in detail by any teacher. If they serve to suggest a line of work, and to indicate, in a general way, a method of teaching that may be modified to suit his needs by the individual teacher, they will have fully accomplished the purpose of the editor.

One point should be settled clearly in advance—the end

to be attained. Speaking broadly, the purpose of all study of English is twofold, the appreciation of literature, and the development of power of expression. In the study of any classic, however, the first aim is the one that must be prominently before the mind. The development of ability to express follows indirectly. Style is not an accomplishment, something that may be superimposed upon one's personality. It is the necessary outcome of personality. Given power to think, and acquaintance with a few fundamental rules of structure, practice is the one thing necessary to develop power of expression. Thus it will be seen that style depends upon the whole intellectual habit of the man, and is conditioned by the training of the mind in all departments of work. No amount or kind of training in English can make a loose thinker habitually express himself with clearness and precision. The blame for the poor English of some of our students lies quite as often with the mathematical and classical departments as with our own, and not infrequently we must hark back still farther if we would accurately place the responsibility.

But although style is not directly secured by the study of English literature, it may be greatly modified and influenced by such study. The most healthful and helpful influence will come from study that is not consciously concerned with one's own power of expression. We are so constituted that we can scarcely help imitating that with which we are closely acquainted, especially if that acquaintance is accompanied by admiration. The more closely and sympathetically we study an author, therefore, the more we shall find our manner of expression conforming to his, especially in those respects in which he appeals to us most strongly. The study of literature, then, that will best help in the development of style is the study that is at the same time most sympathetic and most discriminating, appreciating what is excellent, and condemning what is less worthy.

In other words, the study that will give the best results in the appreciation of literature will also give the best results in acquiring style.

The primary aim, then, in the study of any work is genuine appreciation of that work. The particular points to be emphasized in study will vary in different cases. Usually these points will be those that constitute the peculiar excellence of the work in question. For example, in one case the emphasis would be laid upon the thought, or upon the logical structure of the whole work; in another, the sentence structure and diction might call for particular notice.

What, now, are the points to be noted in the "Essay on Burns"? Viewing it as a whole, we find it decidedly weak in logical structure, rambling and disconnected, but surcharged with moral earnestness and energy. As Mr. Morley has said, it is a "sermon on life," and it is when we view it as such that we find its chief value. The ethical outweighs the intellectual, and the ethical is the side to be emphasized.

From the standpoint of style Carlyle is not, in most respects, a good model for our students. He possessed a wonderful mastery of style, but his impetuosity and extravagance, his desire for strength even at the expense of clearness, make him dangerous unless studied with discrimination. In paragraph structure he is, according to our present-day ideas, painfully deficient. Unity is often entirely lacking, and it sometimes appears almost as if he had written straight ahead, and then divided the matter into paragraphs of convenient size, purely at haphazard. The sentences in the "Essay on Burns" are more normally constructed than in his later work—compare, for example, those in the selection from "Heroes and Hero Worship," appended to the essay in this volume—but even here they set at defiance nearly all rules. It is in his dic-

tion, his choice and use of words, that we find the most to praise unreservedly. The qualities of style that most impress us in the essay are vividness and energy. The secret of this vividness we find in his burning earnestness of heart and intense energy of mind, in his unusual command of words, and in his willingness to sacrifice conventionality, and even clearness if necessary, in order to produce an immediate and powerful effect.

From the broader standpoint, then, the chief point to be emphasized in the study of the essay is Carlyle's thought, the moral that he is trying to teach. From the standpoint of style, the weakness of paragraph structure should be noted in passing, as well as the irregularity of the sentences; but the chief emphasis should be laid upon the vividness and strength of style, made possible by the mastery of words and by the impetuous freedom in the formation of sentences. At the risk of repetition, however, it should be said again that the essay is not well adapted to the study of style, and that the chief emphasis should be laid upon the grasping of the thought and purpose of the whole.

The following is offered as a suggestive plan, capable of being materially modified:

First, let the pupils acquire some knowledge of Carlyle, such as may be gained from the introduction to this book, supplemented by a familiar talk by the teacher, or by reference to easily accessible works. This reverses the usual rule that the study of a man's works should precede the study of his life; but Carlyle is not easy reading for young students, and some knowledge of his personality, aims, and methods will tend to clear up his often confusing obscurity and to straighten out his wandering line of thought. In the same manner a knowledge of the important facts of Burns's life should be acquired, in order that the allusions in the essay may be readily understood. This preliminary

work need take very little time or study; certainly not more than one recitation need be given to it, and it is possible to do it even without that.

In the second place let the pupils read the entire essay out of class, urging them to do it in as few sittings as possible, and cautioning them not to be discouraged if they come out with very confused ideas as to what it is all about. It would be remarkable if they came out otherwise. One of the great moral advantages of the close study of a work of this kind is the revelation to the student of what a wealth of beauty and interest such study can reveal in something that appears, on superficial reading, to be hopelessly dry and barren, or to be entirely beyond their powers. In my own classes when beginning a work of any difficulty, I almost invariably prescribe this preliminary reading, and frequently devote the first recitation to questioning the pupils in such a way as to show how much they have missed in their first reading, and to give them some hint of what will be revealed by closer study. The value is twofold: it teaches them how to read more carefully, and it inculcates the very important truth that the best things in literature do not disclose themselves to the careless reader. Care should be taken to allow ample time for this preliminary reading. The boys and girls in our secondary schools are already worked hard, and Carlyle is by no means easy reading for them.

Then let one or two recitations be devoted to a general discussion of the plan and purpose of the whole essay, and of the most striking characteristics of Carlyle's thought and style, as noticed in the first reading. This discussion should be suggestive rather than complete, and the aim should be rather to formulate inquiries than to answer them. It will have fully served its purpose if it gives the pupils a tolerably clear idea of Carlyle's main purpose in writing the essay, and presents to them certain questions

that can only be answered by closer study. In this discussion it is desirable to note the main divisions of the essay as indicated by the Roman numerals in the text, and to discover the general topic treated under each head, although the exact formulation of these topics should be left till later.

We are now ready to undertake the more detailed study of the essay, say three recitation periods and considerable outside reading having been given to acquiring some slight knowledge of Carlyle and Burns, and to gaining a general, although probably vague, idea of the essay as a whole. The exact plan to be followed in the detailed study will depend largely upon the amount of time available. If time were unlimited a most valuable method of procedure would be to have the whole essay read aloud in class with accompanying question and comment. There is nothing quite as inspiring as the reading aloud of a great work, with enough sharp questions to keep the class thinking, and enough sympathetic comment to clear up the dark places, and to illumine the special points of interest. It is of more value than many written themes and examinations. Time will undoubtedly not allow the carrying out of this plan, but it is desirable to have as much of the essay read aloud as possible, taking pains to select the passages of most importance in the development of the thought, as well as those most marked by eloquence and beauty of style. Some of this reading may be done by the teacher, but it should be done mainly by the class. It may not be so well done, but it will be more effective.

A definite portion of the text should then be assigned for study and recitation, the quantity depending upon the time available and other circumstances. In assigning these lessons, care should be taken to preserve unity of thought; that is, the point of stopping should be determined not by the number of the page, but by Carlyle's development of

the subject. If possible, it would be desirable to have each lesson cover a distinct division or subdivision of the whole essay.

The pupils should be instructed to strive for two things in their study—to grasp the thought and purpose of the whole selection, and to understand the meaning of every sentence and expression in the selection. This last point is of great importance. There are two kinds of appreciation of literature, which may for convenience be distinguished as mechanical and spiritual. They are not mutually exclusive, but in our desire to emphasize the higher, or spiritual, side, we often neglect the lower, but no less important, phase. The result is seen in a certain vagueness of thought and obscurity of expression. The mechanical should precede the spiritual, and there is no legitimate reason why the former should interfere with the latter. The successive steps in a geometrical demonstration are no hindrance to grasping clearly the final conclusion. The point is worth dwelling upon and repeating, for there is a very prevalent idea that the one thing to be sought in the study of literature is the general spirit and purpose, and that attention to details is distinctly unworthy of the highest aims. There is enough truth in this to make it extremely dangerous. Attention to unimportant and irrelevant details is unworthy and distracting, but, as every teacher knows, it is entirely possible for a class or for a pupil to apprehend the general purport of a passage, without any comprehension of the means by which the conclusion has been reached. We are not so much concerned to have the pupil know the conclusion, as to have him follow out the successive steps by which the author has reached that conclusion. It is not of so much importance that he should know what was Carlyle's opinion of "Tam o' Shanter," as that he should have worked out for himself the grounds upon which Carlyle bases that opinion, and

thus be better prepared to understand any similar passage that he may encounter. It is, I think, quite generally agreed that the point in which our pupils in English are most deficient, is in their inability to understand the English language, especially when written or printed, and the result of this, of course, is confusion and obscurity of expression. For this reason, the understanding of every sentence and expression is a matter of great importance, but at the same time it should be impressed upon the pupils that this is only a means to an end, and that the great aim to be always kept in view is the meaning and purpose of the whole.

As an example of what is meant by understanding every sentence and expression, the pupil should be able to answer such questions as the following on the first paragraph: How did Butler "ask for bread and receive a stone"? What is meant by the "maxim of supply and demand"? State the thought contained in the second sentence in your own words, avoiding the use of figures. Explain the meaning of "apostle of a true religion," "aggravation," "posthumous," "in the course of nature," "penury," "prime," "mausoleum," "commentator." State in a single sentence or phrase the topic of the paragraph.

Similar questions in regard to paragraph 28 might be: What is meant by "tenacity"? Explain the second sentence, *i. e.*, what tradition? coöperates with what? Explain the meaning of "Celt," "Cacus," "sturt," "Nimrod," and "Napoleon." Just what does Carlyle mean by that sentence? In the next sentence what does he mean by "a touch of grace"? What is meant by "on the wings of that poor melody his better soul would soar," etc.? Explain "as at Thebes and in Pelops' line." How was "material Fate matched against man's Free-will" in Macpherson's case? How is the feeling with which we listen to the song "half-barbarous, half-poetic"?

The method of recitation, of course, will vary with the individual teacher, but its purpose and aim should be threefold—to test the work of the class, to enlighten them upon the points which they have been unable to master unaided, and to furnish a guide and stimulus for future work. How to attain this triple result is a problem for each teacher to work out for himself, but some suggestions can be given that may be of assistance.

A limited amount of written work to be done in preparation may be assigned with advantage, but the quantity should be small and the subjects specific. For example, if the lesson were the first division of the essay on Burns, the pupils might be required to write out in advance the topic of each paragraph and of the whole division. These should be written on paper ready to be handed in for inspection if desired. In the class the discussion of the various forms suggested supplies an admirable basis for the recitation, and when the final form of the topic has been agreed upon, the pupils should write this or some other approved wording in their note-books. Thus, when the essay is completed, the note-books will contain a tolerably complete and accurate analysis of the whole. With some of Macaulay's essays it is possible to make an almost perfect analysis, by simply writing out the topics of the successive paragraphs, and then dividing these topics into proper groups. This is not possible with Carlyle; indeed, it is sometimes difficult to determine what is the topic of a given paragraph, and the structure of the whole essay cannot be called strictly logical. Still, by following the paragraph structure where it is feasible, and writing down the successive topics without regard to paragraphs where it is not feasible, the desired result may be attained. The advantage of this plan is that it forces the pupil to think as he reads, to think of the particular passage in its relation to the whole, and to formulate con-

cisely his conception of the purpose of the author. An incidental advantage, but one by no means to be despised, is the turning of the attention to paragraph structure, and I am inclined to think that there is no better way for the pupil to attain a mastery of this subject. After the statement of a few principles, the constant turning of the attention to paragraph structure in his reading will fix it in the mind as nothing else can.

The "explanatory notes" should in all cases be referred to by the pupils in preparing the lesson, but any recitation upon them should be conducted with very great caution. It is easy for a pupil to get the idea that preparation of the lesson means learning the notes. They are given as an aid to understanding the essay, and should be so used. It is a debated question whether information in regard to the allusions in the text should be given in the form of notes at all, or whether the pupil should be sent for himself to the encyclopædia and other works of reference. Of course, the habit of looking up allusions for oneself is extremely valuable, and to be encouraged in every way possible; but if all the pupils were to look up all the allusions in such an essay, there would be time for little else, and the study would become that of useful information rather than of literature. Again, it is difficult to see just wherein consists the special virtue of learning when Samuel Butler lived, or who was the inventor of the spinning-jenny, from an encyclopædia rather than from a convenient note. There is far more value, so far as training and habit are concerned, in following one allusion thoroughly, comparing authorities, and formulating a conclusion for oneself, than in looking up twenty names in a biographical dictionary. For this reason the aim has been to supply in the notes practically all the information necessary to understanding the text, and all the pupils are expected to refer constantly to the notes, but not to learn them. Many

of the allusions are worthy of more careful study. These may be assigned to members or sections of the class, with instructions to look them up thoroughly, and to bring in an oral, or better, a short written, statement on the subject. It may be advantageous to allow the pupils some choice in the subjects which they are to look up; hints and suggestions as to the best sources of information should be freely given, and it is well to have the final report accompanied by a statement of the authorities consulted.

Another very useful exercise is to have the pupils summarize, in a single properly constructed paragraph, the thought contained in a given section of the essay, for instance, Carlyle's idea of what Burns's biography should be, as set forth in the first section. Such an exercise should be assigned only after the given portion has been studied and discussed, and after the topical analysis has been completed. Then it becomes a most valuable exercise in the formulation and expression of ideas that already exist in the mind. This touches a most important principle in the assignment of composition subjects, namely, that the topics should almost invariably be those in regard to which the pupil has already formed ideas. Thought must precede expression, but our pupils have as yet very little power of independent thought. Assign them a subject of any difficulty, in regard to which they have not formed definite views, with instructions to write upon it, and the result is certain to be vague and confused, both in thought and expression. The trouble with our students entering college is frequently not so much lack of ability to express, as lack of ability to express that which does not exist; that is, to write coherently on a subject in regard to which they possess no definite ideas.

Some interesting experiments have been tried by the editor in this line. One week he would assign the class a

composition subject like those set a few years ago by nearly all of the colleges in entrance examinations, taking pains to avoid the most difficult and unreasonable. The following week he would assign a subject that was well within their grasp, or a more difficult one that had already been discussed, without any idea on their part, however, that it was eventually to be written upon. The result, as nearly as could be estimated, was that, leaving the thought entirely out of the account, the latter compositions averaged in expression alone, from forty to fifty per cent. better than the former. This superiority extended even to spelling and grammar, and in no instance did the result vary materially.

Another exercise may be to ask a definite question as to some opinion or statement in the text, to be answered in a short, properly constructed paragraph; for instance, What is Carlyle's judgment of Lockhart's "Life"? or What is Carlyle's idea of a model biography? In some instances the pupil may be given the option of stating Carlyle's view or of opposing it.

With very great caution, and perhaps only as an optional subject for pupils to whom it appeals, a general statement, as, for example, the second sentence in the first paragraph, "The inventor of a spinning-jenny is pretty sure of his reward in his own day," etc., may be assigned, to be either proved or opposed in a single paragraph. It is difficult for pupils to write well on such a subject, but if there has been interest awakened by discussion in the class, and if the pupil has been forced to do his thinking before beginning to write, by preparing an analysis of his treatment in advance, this kind of subject may be used sparingly with decided advantage.

It may frequently be found desirable to spend from five to ten minutes of the recitation period in writing a short paragraph on one of the suggested topics. These may be

read aloud and criticised orally, or simply handed in for the usual private inspection.

These remarks may serve to suggest methods in which the study of the essay may afford practice in composition, and in which writing may afford valuable aid in the study of the essay. Care should be taken to select subjects for writing that are relevant to the spirit and purpose of the whole essay, and the treatment of which will aid in gaining a comprehension of that spirit and purpose; the subjects should be definite and specific rather than general; they should be well within the grasp of the pupils' minds, and usually should be topics already discussed in the class. The treatment required should be brief, and everything like padding and diffuseness should be discouraged. Usually it will be well to call for a single paragraph in which the fundamental principles of paragraph structure can be rigidly insisted upon. The experience of teachers is tending strongly to show the practical advantage of making the paragraph the basis of all composition work. A list of topics for writing is appended, which is not intended to be at all exhaustive or complete, or to be followed, even in part, by any teacher, but which may serve to suggest the kind of topics that will be found desirable.

When the entire essay has thus been completed, part by part, two or three recitations should be devoted to discussion of the whole essay, its style, structure, purpose, etc., the aim being to fix in the pupils' minds a clear conception of the work as a whole, and of the general plan on which Carlyle develops his subject. It will be a distinct advantage if the class can again read the entire essay consecutively. If the work has been successfully done, this second reading will be almost a revelation to them, both of the beauty and interest of the essay, and of the value of careful study of a great literary work. The last recitation period may fitly be devoted to a written examination, in

which the questions, however, should test the pupils' appreciation of the plan and purpose of the whole essay, rather than their knowledge of details.

While with other prose writers, Addison, Macaulay, and Webster, for example, the rhetorical element may be emphasized, and their writings may be used as a basis for the study of style, with Carlyle this element should be distinctly subordinated. True, this essay is marked by a superb mastery of style, and does not disclose the extravagant mannerisms of later years; still, even at his best, Carlyle is a dangerous model to place before students who are not able to discriminate clearly, and who are more likely to imitate his mannerisms than those things that give him his real power. For this reason, the rhetorical study of this essay should be distinctly subordinate and incidental. A few recitation periods might perhaps be devoted to the formal study of Carlyle's style, but it will probably be found better simply to call attention, in passing, to the most noteworthy points.

In formulating the topical analysis it will be easy to note the excellence or weakness of the paragraph structure. The two points to be particularly observed, are the indication of the topic at the beginning of the paragraph, and the unity of subject, or the lack of it, in the paragraph itself. This work, as has been already said, has a double value, in that it is also of great assistance in obtaining a clear understanding of the thought.

The sentences in "Burns" and Carlyle's earlier essays are constructed on more conventional lines than in his later work. In some cases they are apparently fashioned with considerable care and thought. They are generally "extremely simple in construction—consisting, for the most part, of two or three co-ordinate statements, or of a short, direct statement, eked out by explanatory clauses either in apposition or in the 'nominative absolute' construction.

These apposition and absolute clauses are the 'tag-rags,' and it is in the connection of them with the main statement that we find the 'dashes and parentheses.'" Examples of this form of sentence may be found in nearly every paragraph, and it will usually be found sufficient for the teacher to point out occasional striking instances.

In command of words Carlyle stands in the very front rank. It has been said that "in the language needful for describing character he probably comes nearer Shakspere than any other of our great writers." For an example of this, taken almost at random, read aloud paragraph 18. In later life two mannerisms grew upon him —the use of what may be called "barbarous words," and the use of one part of speech for another,—nouns for verbs, adjectives and adverbs for nouns. These peculiarities, however, are not noticeable in this essay, although examples may be found.

Carlyle's use of figures is one of the most striking evidences of his original power, and some attention may well be paid to this characteristic of his style. In studying figures, however, the aim should be to discover how they are used to produce the desired effect, rather than to attempt to classify them. The striking figures should be noted in passing, and it may be well to select a few passages in which they are especially abundant for closer study.

An immature student, however, is hardly capable of analyzing the secret of Carlyle's style. Strength, vividness, energy,—these are his striking characteristics, and these must be felt, rather than found by dissection. To rouse in the pupil a sense of his power, and to give him perhaps a general idea of the means by which he attained it, is about all that may wisely be attempted. The pupils may be encouraged to mark passages that especially appeal to them, and to note any particularly striking instances of the use of words or figures, but the chief reliance must be

upon the enthusiastic appreciation of the teacher, and on his power to inspire the class with his feeling. Enthusiasm is contagious, and the teacher who possesses it has small need of prescribed methods to communicate it to his pupils.

These suggestions have been made in the hope that they may be useful as hints, to be developed or modified according to one's own individuality, but it should never be forgotten that the power in teaching is not in the method or in the text-book, but in the personality of the teacher. The stronger the teacher, the less should he be held to prescribed methods. A definite aim and enthusiasm—these are the essentials for the teaching of English, as for the teaching of every subject.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.—*Burns:* Editions of Burns's poems are almost numberless. Almost any one of them will serve a student's purpose. The best cheap edition is that of Fawside (Longmans). The best of the more elaborate editions are Dr. Chambers's "Life and Works of Robert Burns," revised and partially rewritten by William Wallace (four vols., Longmans); "Works of Robert Burns," (six vols., Paterson); and "The Poetry of Burns," edited by Henley and Henderson (Edinburgh, Jack; Boston, Houghton). A volume of Burns's letters is included in the Camelot Classics. The best short biographies of Burns are those by Leslie Stephen in the "National Dictionary of Biography"; Professor Blackie (Great Writers Series); Principal Shairp (English Men of Letters Series); and Gabriel Setoun (Great Scots Series). The most complete life is that by Dr. Chambers, mentioned above. Lockhart's biography, which Carlyle reviewed, still keeps its interest. Explanations of Burns's Scotch may be found in the glossaries that accompany almost every edition of his poems, and in Cuthbertson's "Complete Glossary to the Poetry and Prose of R. Burns." The best and most interesting criticisms on Burns will be found

in the biographies mentioned above, in Taine's "History of English Literature," Minto's "Literature of the Georgian Era," Mrs. Oliphant's "Literary History of England in the End of the Eighteenth and the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century," Veitch's "The Feeling for Nature in Scotch Poetry," Ward's "English Poets," and in Stevenson's essay in "Familiar Studies of Men and Books." The student will be interested in looking up Whittier's and Wordsworth's poems on Burns, and the criticisms by Emerson ("Miscellanies"), and Hawthorne ("Our Old Home"). A good bibliography may be found at the end of Blackie's "Life."

Carlyle: The various editions and reprints of Carlyle's works call for no special comment. The best short biographies of Carlyle are those by Garnett (Great Writers Series); Leslie Stephen (in the "National Dictionary of Biography"); and by Nichol (English Men of Letters Series). Froude's longer "Life" in four volumes may be consulted for more minute information, as well as the volumes of Carlyle's correspondence with Emerson, Goethe, etc., which have been edited by Professor C. E. Norton. The best criticisms are those by Arnold, in the lecture on Emerson, published in his "Discourses in America"; Lowell, in "My Study Windows"; Minto in his "Manual of English Prose Literature"; and John Morley, in his "Critical Miscellanies." For the host of magazine articles Poole's "Index" may be consulted. A good bibliography will be found at the end of Garnett's "Life."

SPECIMEN TOPICS FOR WRITTEN EXERCISES

UNLESS expressly stated otherwise, it is understood that each exercise is to consist of a single properly constructed paragraph. Topics preceded by a * are intended as optional subjects, to be assigned only to special pupils. Suggestions as to allusions that may be more carefully investigated, may be gained from the Explanatory Notes.

1. Is the statement in the second sentence of paragraph 1 —"The inventor of a spinning-jenny," etc.—true, and if so, why?

2. What did Carlyle think had been lacking in the previous biographies of Burns? (Paragraphs 2–5.)

3. What is Carlyle's theory of a good biography? (Paragraph 5.)

4. What is meant by the expression, "He had his very materials to discover"? How and why was his material new? (Paragraph 6.)

5. *Compare Carlyle's view (in paragraph 6) of the unfavorable circumstances surrounding Burns, with Macaulay's view of those affecting Milton, in the first part of the essay on Milton. Are they inconsistent, and if so which is right? (Two or three paragraphs.)

6. Summarize in a single paragraph the leading ideas of the second division of the essay. (Paragraphs 6–9.)

7. *Compare the thought in lines 29–33, page 11, with a similar idea in the first paragraph of Emerson's essay on "Self-Reliance."

8. * Carlyle and Emerson—their similarity as authors and their friendship as men. (Length optional.)

9. What does Carlyle mean by "Sincerity"? (Paragraphs 11, 12.)

10. Condense the thought in paragraphs 11–13 into a single, short, well-balanced paragraph.

11. * How does Carlyle's opinion in paragraph 12 agree with that expressed by Matthew Arnold in his essay on Byron?

12. Condense the thought of paragraphs 14–17 into one.

13. Compare Burns's description of a snow-storm (see paragraph 19) with Whittier's handling of the same subject in "Snowbound."

14. * Read Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes," and, if possible, Matthew Arnold's essay on Keats, and give your opinion of Carlyle's judgment in paragraph 21.

15. What are the qualities named by Carlyle as constituting the excellence of Burns's writings? (Part III.)

16. * What points of likeness can you discover between Burns's poems, as described by Carlyle, and Whittier's? (Length optional.)

17. What is Carlyle's judgment as to the merit of Burns's individual poems? (Paragraphs 30–34.)

18. What was Burns's influence on the literature of Scotland? (Paragraphs 35–37.)

19. What was the peculiar character of Burns's manhood according to Carlyle? (Paragraphs 38–40.)

20. State in your own words Carlyle's argument (in paragraph 42) against the necessity of "sowing wild oats."

21. What impression did Burns make on Sir Walter Scott? (Paragraphs 47–51.)

22. What reasons does Carlyle say (paragraphs 62–64) have been assigned by others for Burns's failure, and how does he dispose of these reasons?

23. Restate in your own words the argument in paragraphs 65–73, as if it were your own thought. (Two or three paragraphs.)

24. How does the "Essay on Burns" fulfil Carlyle's theory of a good biography? (See paragraph 5.)

25. State as well as you can, in three or four hundred words, the leading ideas advanced in the "Essay on Burns."

26. The strength and vividness of Carlyle's style, illustrated by quotations from the "Essay on Burns." (Two or three paragraphs.)

SPECIMEN EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

THE following may serve to indicate the sort of questions that a pupil might reasonably be expected to answer after having completed a thorough study of the "Essay on Burns." The time available for the examination will determine the number of questions to be set. It may be wiser to divide the examination, covering part of the ground in one or two written recitations before the study of the essay is completed.

1. THOMAS CARLYLE AND THE ESSAY ON BURNS: Give a short sketch of Carlyle's life. What were his principal works? State his view, expressed in this essay, as to the highest function of biography. In what points does his account of Burns seem to you to fulfil his ideal? What qualities does Carlyle name as constituting the excellence of Burns's poetry? What does Carlyle rank as the best of Burns's poems? What does Carlyle consider to have been the fatal defect in Burns's character? What does Carlyle say as to Burns's influence on the literature of his country?

2. ROBERT BURNS: Mention six of Burns's principal poems, and give a brief account of them, or quote at least ten lines of one of them. In what kind of poetry was Burns at his best? What is his position in English literature? What American poet resembles him, and in what respects? Give a short account of Burns's first visit to Edinburgh.

3. REFERENCES AND ALLUSIONS: Explain the reference or allusion in each of the following words or phrases:

Arcadian illusion (9 3); *the verses which Indignation makes* (26 18); *Northland Cacus* (27 15); *Thebes, and in Pelops' line* (27 25); *Limbo* (31 19); *Jacobite blood* (34 2); *lie at the pool* (48 27); *twice cursed* (55 26); *poison-chalice* (58 6).

4. MEANING OF WORDS: Explain the meaning (and, if necessary for that purpose, the etymology) of the following words: *virtuosos* (10 30); *modica* (48 2); *loadstar* (51 6); *Grazierdom* (52 4); *Martyrology* (58 10); *Verse-monger* (59 20).

5. GRAMMAR: Analyze, in such a way as to show clearly the syntactical structure, the second sentence in paragraph 53 (48 1–6) and the sentence forming paragraph 59 (52 35–58 6). Parse *which exchange* (48 4), *who* (53 4).

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—BURNS.

BURNS'S LIFE AND WORKS.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.
1759. January 25. Born.	1759. Johnson, Rasselas. Sterne, Tristram Shandy (vols i. and ii.).
	1762. Lord Kames, Elements of Criticism. Macpherson, Poems of Ossian.
	1764. Johnson's Club founded. Walpole, The Castle of Otranto.
	1765. Percy, Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.
1766. Family removes to Mount Oliphant.	1766. Goldsmith, The Vicar of Wakefield.
	1768. Gray, Poems.
	1769. Robertson, History of Charles V.
	1773. Goethe, Götz von Berlichingen.
1774. Composes his first song.	
	1775. Burke, On Conciliation with America. Johnson, Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland.
	1776. Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations. Gibbon, Roman Empire, vol. i.
1777. Family removes to Lochlea, Tarbolton.	
1778. Spends a summer at Kirkoswald, in Carrick.	
1779. Composes Winter, Death of Poor Mailie, etc.	
1781. For several months at Irvine, as a flaxdresser.	1781. Schiller, Die Räuber.
1783. Becomes a Freemason.	
1784. His father dies. First known as a local rhymster. Takes, with his brother, the farm of Mossgiel, in Mauchline.	
1785. The Holy Fair and other satirical poems. Halloween, The Cotter's Saturday Night, etc.	1785. Cowper, The Task.
1786. First edition of his poems. Is about to go to Jamaica. His genius recognized. Edinburgh.	
1787. Success at Edinburgh. Second edition of poems. Travels in Scotland.	
1788. Takes the farm of Ellisland, near Dumfries. Marries Jean Armour.	
	1789. Blake, Songs of Innocence.
1790. Is appointed Exciseman.	
1791. Member of the Dumfries Volunteers. Removes to Dumfries.	
1793. Fourth edition of his poems. Reprimanded by the Excise Board.	1793. Wordsworth, An Evening Walk.
1795-96. In bad health.	
1796. July 21. Dies.	1796. Coleridge, Poems. Scott, Translation of Bürger's Lenore. Southey, Joan of Arc.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—CARLYLE.

CARLYLE'S LIFE AND WORKS.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.
1795. Born.	1798. Wordsworth and Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads.
1805. School at Annan.	1808. Scott, Marmion.
1809. Enters Edinburgh University.	1812. Byron, Childe Harold (Cantos I. and II.).
	1813. Southey, Life of Nelson.
1814. Appointed mathematical teacher at Annan.	
1816. Appointed mathematical teacher at Kirkcaldy.	1816. Shelley, Alastor.
	1817. Bryant, Thanatopsis. Moore, Lalla Rookh.
1818. Returns to Edinburgh.	1818. Keats, Endymion.
	1821. De Quincey, Confessions of an Opium Eater.
1822. Appointed tutor to the Bullers.	1822. Lamb, Essays of Elia.
1823–24. Life of Schiller appears in *London Magazine*.	
1824. Translation of Wilhelm Meister.	1824. Irving, Tales of a Traveller.
	1825. Macaulay, Essay on Milton.
1826. Married.	1826. Cooper, Last of the Mohicans.
1828. Removes to Craigenputtock. Essay on Burns.	
1830. Writes Sartor Resartus.	
1834. Removes to Chelsea.	1834. Bancroft, History of the United States, vol. i. Bulwer, Last Days of Pompeii.
	1836. Dickens, Pickwick Papers. Holmes, Poems.
1837. French Revolution. First course of lectures.	1837. Hawthorne, Twice-Told Tales. Prescott, Ferdinand and Isabella. Whittier, Poems.
1840. Chartism.	
1841. Heroes and Hero Worship.	1841. Browning, Pippa Passes. Emerson, Essays.
1843. Past and Present.	1843. Ruskin, Modern Painters (vol. i.).
	1844. Elizabeth Barrett (Browning), Poems.
1845. Life and Letters of Oliver Cromwell.	1845. Poe, The Raven and other Poems.
	1847. Longfellow, Evangeline. Thackeray, Vanity Fair Tennyson, The Princess.
	1848. Lowell, The Biglow Papers.
	1849. Parkman, California and the Oregon Trail.
1850. Latter-day Pamphlets.	
1851. Life of John Sterling.	1851. Spencer, Social Statics.
1858. First two volumes of Frederick the Great.	
	1859. Darwin, Origin of Species.
	1861. George Eliot, Silas Marner.
	1864. Swinburne, Atalanta in Calydon. Newman, Apologia.
1865. Frederick the Great completed.	1865. Arnold, Essays in Criticism.
1866. Lord Rector's address at Edinburgh. Mrs. Carlyle's death.	1866. Howells, Venetian Life.
	1875. Meredith, Beauchamp's Career.
	1878. Henry James, The Europeans.
1881. Dies.	1881. Stevenson, Virginibus Puerisque.

BURNS[1]

I. 1. In the modern arrangements of society, it is no uncommon thing that a man of genius must, like Butler, "ask for bread and receive a stone;" for, in spite of our grand maxim of supply and demand, it is by no means the highest excellence that men are most forward to recognise. The inventor of a spinning-jenny is pretty sure of his reward in his own day; but the writer of a true poem, like the apostle of a true religion, is nearly as sure of the contrary. We do not know whether it is not an aggravation of the injustice, that there is generally a posthumous retribution. Robert Burns, in the course of Nature, might yet have been living; but his short life was spent in toil and penury; and he died, in the prime of his manhood, miserable and neglected: and yet already a brave mausoleum shines over his dust, and more than one splendid monument has been reared in other places to his fame; the street where he languished in poverty is called by his name; the highest personages in our literature have been proud to appear as his commentators and admirers; and here is the *sixth* narrative of his *Life* that has been given to the world!

2. Mr. Lockhart thinks it necessary to apologise for this new attempt on such a subject: but his readers, we believe, will readily acquit him; or, at worst, will censure only the performance of his task, not the choice of it. The character of Burns, indeed, is a theme that cannot easily become either trite or exhausted; and will probably gain rather than lose in its dimensions by the distance to

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, No. 96: *The Life of Robert Burns*. By J. G. Lockhart. Edinburgh, 1828.

which it is removed by Time. No man, it has been said, is a hero to his valet; and this is probably true; but the fault is at least as likely to be the valet's as the hero's. For it is certain, that to the vulgar eye few things are wonderful that are not distant. It is difficult for men to believe that the man, the mere man whom they see, nay perhaps painfully feel, toiling at their side through the poor jostlings of existence, can be made of finer clay than themselves. Suppose that some dining acquaintance of Sir Thomas Lucy's, and neighbour of John a Combe's, had snatched an hour or two from the preservation of his game, and written us a Life of Shakspeare! What dissertations should we not have had,—not on "Hamlet" and "The Tempest," but on the wool-trade, and deer-stealing, and the libel and vagrant laws; and how the Poacher became a Player; and how Sir Thomas and Mr. John had Christian bowels, and did not push him to extremities! In like manner, we believe, with respect to Burns, that till the companions of his pilgrimage, the Honourable Excise Commissioners, and the Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt, and the Dumfries Aristocracy, and all the Squires and Earls, equally with the Ayr Writers, and the New and Old Light Clergy, whom he had to do with, shall have become invisible in the darkness of the Past, or visible only by light borrowed from *his* juxtaposition, it will be difficult to measure him by any true standard, or to estimate what he really was and did, in the eighteenth century, for his country and the world. It will be difficult, we say; but still a fair problem for literary historians; and repeated attempts will give us repeated approximations.

3. His former Biographers have done something, no doubt, but by no means a great deal, to assist us. Dr. Currie and Mr. Walker, the principal of these writers, have both, we think, mistaken one essentially important thing: Their own and the world's true relation to their

author, and the style in which it became such men to think and to speak of such a man. Dr. Currie loved the poet truly; more perhaps than he avowed to his readers, or even to himself; yet he everywhere introduces him with a certain patronising, apologetic air; as if the polite public might think it strange and half unwarrantable that he, a man of science, a scholar and gentleman, should do such honour to a rustic. In all this, however, we readily admit that his fault was not want of love, but weakness of faith; and regret that the first and kindest of all our poet's biographers should not have seen farther, or believed more boldly what he saw. Mr. Walker offends more deeply in the same kind: and both err alike in presenting us with a detached catalogue of his several supposed attributes, virtues and vices, instead of a delineation of the resulting character as a living unity. This, however, is not painting a portrait; but gauging the length and breadth of the several features, and jotting down their dimensions in arithmetical ciphers. Nay it is not so much as that: for we are yet to learn by what arts or instruments the mind *could* be so measured and gauged.

4. Mr. Lockhart, we are happy to say, has avoided both these errors. He uniformly treats Burns as the high and remarkable man the public voice has now pronounced him to be: and in delineating him, he has avoided the method of separate generalities, and rather sought for characteristic incidents, habits, actions, sayings; in a word, for aspects which exhibit the whole man, as he looked and lived among his fellows. The book accordingly, with all its deficiencies, gives more insight, we think, into the true character of Burns, than any prior biography: though, [illegible] on the very popular and condensed scheme of [illegible] for "Constable's Miscellany," it has less depth than we could have wished and expected from a writer of such power, and contains rather more, and more multi-

farious quotations than belong of right to an original production. Indeed, Mr. Lockhart's own writing is generally so good, so clear, direct and nervous, that we seldom wish to see it making place for another man's. However, the spirit of the work is throughout candid, tolerant and anxiously conciliating; compliments and praises are liberally distributed, on all hands, to great and small; and, as Mr. Morris Birkbeck observes of the society in the backwoods of America, "the courtesies of polite life are never lost sight of for a moment." But there are better things than these in the volume; and we can safely testify, not only that it is easily and pleasantly read a first time, but may even be without difficulty read again.

5. Nevertheless, we are far from thinking that the problem of Burns's Biography has yet been adequately solved. We do not allude so much to deficiency of facts or documents,—though of these we are still every day receiving some fresh accession,—as to the limited and imperfect application of them to the great end of Biography. Our notions upon this subject may perhaps appear extravagant; but if an individual is really of consequence enough to have his life and character recorded for public remembrance, we have always been of opinion that the public ought to be made acquainted with all the inward springs and relations of his character. How did the world and man's life, from his particular position, represent themselves to his mind? How did coexisting circumstances modify him from without; how did he modify these from within? With what endeavours and what efficacy rule over them; with what resistance and what suffering sink under them? In one word, what and how produced was the effect of society on him; what and how produced was his effect on society? He who should answer these questions, in regard to any individual, would, as we believe, furnish a model of perfection in Biography. Few individuals, indeed, can de-

serve such a study; and many *lives* will be written, and, for the gratification of innocent curiosity, ought to be written, and read and forgotten, which are not in this sense *biographies*. But Burns, if we mistake not, is one of these few individuals; and such a study, at least with such a result, he has not yet obtained. Our own contributions to it, we are aware, can be but scanty and feeble; but we offer them with good-will, and trust they may meet with acceptance from those they are intended for.

II. 6. Burns first came upon the world as a prodigy; and was, in that character, entertained by it, in the usual fashion, with loud, vague, tumultuous wonder, speedily subsiding into censure and neglect; till his early and most mournful death again awakened an enthusiasm for him, which, especially as there was now nothing to be done, and much to be spoken, has prolonged itself even to our own time. It is true, the "nine days" have long since elapsed; and the very continuance of this clamour proves that Burns was no vulgar wonder. Accordingly, even in sober judgments, where, as years passed by, he has come to rest more and more exclusively on his own intrinsic merits, and may now be well-nigh shorn of that casual radiance, he appears not only as a true British poet, but as one of the most considerable British men of the eighteenth century. Let it not be objected that he did little. He did much, if we consider where and how. If the work performed was small, we must remember that he had his very materials to discover; for the metal he worked in lay hid under the desert moor, where no eye but his had guessed its existence; and we may almost say, that with his own hand he had to construct the tools for fashioning it. For he found himself in deepest obscurity, without help, without instruction, without model; or with models only of the meanest sort. An educated man stands, as it were, in the midst of

a boundless arsenal and magazine, filled with all the weapons and engines which man's skill has been able to devise from the earliest time; and he works, accordingly, with a strength borrowed from all past ages. How different is *his* state who stands on the outside of that storehouse, and feels that its gates must be stormed, or remain forever shut against him! His means are the commonest and rudest; the mere work done is no measure of his strength. A dwarf behind his steam-engine may remove mountains; but no dwarf will hew them down with a pickaxe; and he must be a Titan that hurls them abroad with his arms.

7. It is in this last shape that Burns presents himself. Born in an age the most prosaic Britain had yet seen, and in a condition the most disadvantageous, where his mind, if it accomplished aught, must accomplish it under the pressure of continual bodily toil, nay of penury and desponding apprehension of the worst evils, and with no furtherance but such knowledge as dwells in a poor man's hut, and the rhymes of a Ferguson or Ramsay for his standard of beauty, he sinks not under all these impediments: through the fogs and darkness of that obscure region, his lynx eye discerns the true relations of the world and human life; he grows into intellectual strength, and trains himself into intellectual expertness. Impelled by the expansive movement of his own irrepressible soul, he struggles forward into the general view; and with haughty modesty lays down before us, as the fruit of his labour, a gift, which Time has now pronounced imperishable. Add to all this, that his darksome drudging childhood and youth was by far the kindliest era of his whole life; and that he died in his thirty-seventh year: and then ask, If it be strange that his poems are imperfect, and of small extent, or that his genius attained no mastery in its art? Alas, his Sun shone as through a tropical tornado; and the pale Shadow of Death eclipsed it at noon! Shrouded in

such baleful vapours, the genius of Burns was never seen in clear azure splendour, enlightening the world: but some beams from it did, by fits, pierce through; and it tinted those clouds with rainbow and orient colours, into a glory and stern grandeur, which men silently gazed on with wonder and tears!

8. We are anxious not to exaggerate; for it is exposition rather than admiration that our readers require of us here; and yet to avoid some tendency to that side is no easy matter. We love Burns, and we pity him; and love and pity are prone to magnify. Criticism, it is sometimes thought, should be a cold business; we are not so sure of this; but, at all events, our concern with Burns is not exclusively that of critics. True and genial as his poetry must appear, it is not chiefly as a poet, but as a man, that he interests and affects us. He was often advised to write a tragedy: time and means were not lent him for this; but through life he enacted a tragedy, and one of the deepest. We question whether the world has since witnessed so utterly sad a scene; whether Napoleon himself, left to brawl with Sir Hudson Lowe, and perish on his rock, "amid the melancholy main," presented to the reflecting mind such a "spectacle of pity and fear" as did this intrinsically nobler, gentler and perhaps greater soul, wasting itself away in a hopeless struggle with base entanglements, which coiled closer and closer round him, till only death opened him an outlet. Conquerors are a class of men with whom, for most part, the world could well dispense; nor can the hard intellect, the unsympathising loftiness and high but selfish enthusiasm of such persons inspire us in general with any affection; at best it may excite amazement; and their fall, like that of a pyramid, will be beheld with a certain sadness and awe. But a true Poet, a man in whose heart resides some effluence of Wisdom, some tone of the "Eternal Melodies," is the most precious gift that can

be bestowed on a generation: we see in him a freer, purer development of whatever is noblest in ourselves; his life is a rich lesson to us; and we mourn his death as that of a benefactor who loved and taught us.

9. Such a gift had Nature, in her bounty, bestowed on us in Robert Burns; but with queenlike indifference she cast it from her hand, like a thing of no moment; and it was defaced and torn asunder, as an idle bauble, before we recognised it. To the ill-starred Burns was given the power of making man's life more venerable, but that of wisely guiding his own life was not given. Destiny,—for so in our ignorance we must speak,—his faults, the faults of others, proved too hard for him; and that spirit, which might have soared could it but have walked, soon sank to the dust, its glorious faculties trodden under foot in the blossom; and died, we may almost say, without ever having lived. And so kind and warm a soul; so full of inborn riches, of love to all living and lifeless things! How his heart flows out in sympathy over universal Nature; and in her bleakest provinces discerns a beauty and a meaning! The "Daisy" falls not unheeded under his ploughshare; nor the ruined nest of that "wee, cowering, timorous beastie," cast forth, after all its provident pains, to "thole the sleety dribble and cranreuch cauld." The "hoar visage" of Winter delights him; he dwells with a sad and oft-returning fondness in these scenes of solemn desolation; but the voice of the tempest becomes an anthem to his ears; he loves to walk in the sounding woods, for "it raises his thoughts to *Him that walketh on the wings of the wind.*" A true Poet-soul, for it needs but to be struck, and the sound it yields will be music! But observe him chiefly as he mingles with his brother men. What warm, all-comprehending fellow-feeling: what trustful, boundless love; what generous exaggeration of the object loved! His rustic friend, his nut-brown maiden, are no longer

mean and homely, but a hero and a queen, whom he prizes as the paragons of Earth. The rough scenes of Scottish life, not seen by him in any Arcadian illusion, but in the rude contradiction, in the smoke and soil of a too harsh reality, are still lovely to him: Poverty is indeed his companion, but Love also, and Courage; the simple feelings, the worth, the nobleness, that dwell under the straw roof, are dear and venerable to his heart: and thus over the lowest provinces of man's existence he pours the glory of his own soul; and they rise, in shadow and sunshine, softened and brightened into a beauty which other eyes discern not in the highest. He has a just self-consciousness, which too often degenerates into pride; yet it is a noble pride, for defence, not for offence; no cold suspicious feeling, but a frank and social one. The Peasant Poet bears himself, we might say, like a King in exile: he is cast among the low, and feels himself equal to the highest; yet he claims no rank, that none may be disputed to him. The forward he can repel, the supercilious he can subdue; pretensions of wealth or ancestry are of no avail with him; there is a fire in that dark eye, under which the "insolence of condescension" cannot thrive. In his abasement, in his extreme need, he forgets not for a moment the majesty of Poetry and Manhood. And yet, far as he feels himself above common men, he wanders not apart from them, but mixes warmly in their interests; nay throws himself into their arms, and, as it were, entreats them to love him. It is moving to see how, in his darkest despondency, this proud being still seeks relief from friendship; unbosoms himself, often to the unworthy; and, amid tears, strains to his glowing heart a heart that knows only the name of friendship. And yet he was "quick to learn;" a man of keen vision, before whom common disguises afforded no concealment. His understanding saw through the hollowness even of accomplished deceivers; but there was a

generous credulity in his heart. And so did our Peasant show himself among us; "a soul like an Æolian harp, in whose strings the vulgar wind, as it passed through them, changed itself into articulate melody." And this was he for whom the world found no fitter business than quarrelling with smugglers and vintners, computing excise-dues upon tallow, and gauging ale-barrels! In such toils was that mighty Spirit sorrowfully wasted: and a hundred years may pass on, before another such is given us to waste.

III. 10. All that remains of Burns, the Writings he has left, seem to us, as we hinted above, no more than a poor mutilated fraction of what was in him; brief, broken glimpses of a genius that could never show itself complete; that wanted all things for completeness: culture, leisure, true effort, nay even length of life. His poems are, with scarcely any exception, mere occasional effusions; poured forth with little premeditation; expressing, by such means as offered, the passion, opinion, or humour of the hour. Never in one instance was it permitted him to grapple with any subject with the full collection of his strength, to fuse and mould it in the concentrated fire of his genius. To try by the strict rules of Art such imperfect fragments, would be at once unprofitable and unfair. Nevertheless, there is something in these poems, marred and defective as they are, which forbids the most fastidious student of poetry to pass them by. Some sort of enduring quality they must have: for after fifty years of the wildest vicissitudes in poetic taste, they still continue to be read; nay, are read more and more eagerly, more and more extensively; and this not only by literary virtuosos, and that class upon whom transitory causes operate most strongly, but by all classes, down to the most hard, unlettered and truly natural class, who read little, and especially no poetry, except because they find pleasure in it. The grounds of so singular

and wide a . . . ch extends, in a literal sense, from the I . . . , and over all regions where the Englis . . . en, are well worth inquiring into. Afte . . . action, it seems to imply some rare excellence in these works. What is that excellence?

11. To answer this question will not lead us far. The excellence of Burns is, indeed, among the rarest, whether in poetry or prose; but, at the same time, it is plain and easily recognised: his *Sincerity*, his indisputable air of Truth. Here are no fabulous woes or joys; no hollow fantastic sentimentalities; no wiredrawn refinings, either in thought or feeling: the passion that is traced before us has glowed in a living heart; the opinion he utters has risen in his own understanding, and been a light to his own steps. He does not write from hearsay, but from sight and experience; it is the scenes that he has lived and laboured amidst, that he describes: those scenes, rude and humble as they are, have kindled beautiful emotions in his soul, noble thoughts, and definite resolves; and he speaks forth what is in him, not from any outward call of vanity or interest, but because his heart is too full to be silent. He speaks it with such melody and modulation as he can; "in homely rustic jingle;" but it is his own, and genuine. This is the grand secret for finding readers and retaining them: let him who would move and convince others, be first moved and convinced himself. Horace's rule, *Si vis me flere*, is applicable in a wider sense than the literal one. To every poet, to every writer, we might say: Be true, if you would be believed. Let a man but speak forth with genuine earnestness the thought, the emotion, the actual condition of his own heart; and other men, so strangely are we all knit together by the tie of sympathy, must and will give heed to him. In culture, in extent of view, we may stand above the speaker, or below him; but in either case, his words, if they are earnest and sincere, will find some

response within us; for in spite of all casual varieties in outward rank or inward, as face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man.

12. This may appear a very simple principle, and one which Burns had little merit in discovering. True, the discovery is easy enough: but the practical appliance is not easy; is indeed the fundamental difficulty which all poets have to strive with, and which scarcely one in the hundred ever fairly surmounts. A head too dull to discriminate the true from the false; a heart too dull to love the one at all risks, and to hate the other in spite of all temptations, are alike fatal to a writer. With either, or as more commonly happens, with both of these deficiencies combine a love of distinction, a wish to be original, which is seldom wanting, and we have Affectation, the bane of literature, as Cant, its elder brother, is of morals. How often does the one and the other front us, in poetry, as in life! Great poets themselves are not always free of this vice; nay, it is precisely on a certain sort and degree of greatness that it is most commonly ingrafted. A strong effort after excellence will sometimes solace itself with a mere shadow of success; he who has much to unfold, will sometimes unfold it imperfectly. Byron, for instance, was no common man: yet if we examine his poetry with this view, we shall find it far enough from faultless. Generally speaking, we should say that it is not true. He refreshes us, not with the divine fountain, but too often with vulgar strong waters, stimulating indeed to the taste, but soon ending in dislike, or even nausea. Are his Harolds and Giaours, we would ask, real men; we mean, poetically consistent and conceivable men? Do not these characters, does not the character of their author, which more or less shines through them all, rather appear a thing put on for the occasion; no natural or possible mode of being, but something intended to look much grander than nature? Surely, all those

stormful agonies, this volcanic heroism, superhuman contempt and moody desperation, with so much scowling, and teeth-gnashing, and other sulphurous humour, is more like the brawling of a player in some paltry tragedy, which is to last three hours, than the bearing of a man in the business of life, which is to last threescore and ten years. To our minds there is a taint of this sort, something which we should call theatrical, false, affected, in every one of these otherwise so powerful pieces. Perhaps "Don Juan," especially the latter parts of it, is the only thing approaching to a *sincere* work, he ever wrote; the only work where he showed himself, in any measure, as he was; and seemed so intent on his subject as, for moments, to forget himself. Yet Byron hated this vice; we believe, heartily detested it: nay he had declared formal war against it in words. So difficult is it even for the strongest to make this primary attainment, which might seem the simplest of all: to *read its own consciousness without mistakes*, without errors involuntary or wilful! We recollect no poet of Burns's susceptibility who comes before us from the first, and abides with us to the last, with such a total want of affectation. He is an honest man, and an honest writer. In his successes and his failures, in his greatness and his littleness, he is ever clear, simple, true, and glitters with no lustre but his own. We reckon this to be a great virtue; to be, in fact, the root of most other virtues, literary as well as moral.

13. Here, however, let us say, it is to the Poetry of Burns that we now allude; to those writings which he had time to meditate, and where no special reason existed to warp his critical feeling, or obstruct his endeavour to fulfil it. Certain of his Letters, and other fractions of prose composition, by no means deserve this praise. Here, doubtless, there is not the same natural truth of style; but on the contrary, something not only stiff, but strained

and twisted; a certain high-flown inflated tone; the stilting emphasis of which contrasts ill with the firmness and rugged simplicity of even his poorest verses. Thus no man, it would appear, is altogether unaffected. Does not Shakspeare himself sometimes premeditate the sheerest bombast! But even with regard to these Letters of Burns, it is but fair to state that he had two excuses. The first was his comparative deficiency in language. Burns, though for most part he writes with singular force and even gracefulness, is not master of English prose, as he is of Scottish verse; not master of it, we mean, in proportion to the depth and vehemence of his matter. These Letters strike us as the effort of a man to express something which he has no organ fit for expressing. But a second and weightier excuse is to be found in the peculiarity of Burns's social rank. His correspondents are often men whose relation to him he has never accurately ascertained; whom therefore he is either forearming himself against, or else unconsciously flattering, by adopting the style he thinks will please them. At all events we should remember that these faults, even in his Letters, are not the rule, but the exception. Whenever he writes, as one would ever wish to do, to trusted friends and on real interests, his style becomes simple, vigorous, expressive, sometimes even beautiful. His letters to Mrs. Dunlop are uniformly excellent.

14. But we return to his Poetry. In addition to its Sincerity, it has another peculiar merit, which indeed is but a mode, or perhaps a means, of the foregoing: this displays itself in his choice of subjects; or rather in his indifference as to subjects, and the power he has of making all subjects interesting. The ordinary poet, like the ordinary man, is forever seeking in external circumstances the help which can be found only in himself. In what is familiar and near at hand, he discerns no form or comeliness: home is

not poetical but prosaic; it is in some past, distant, conventional heroic world, that poetry resides; were he there and not here, were he thus and not so, it would be well with him. Hence our innumerable host of rose-coloured Novels and iron-mailed Epics, with their locality not on the Earth, but somewhere nearer to the Moon. Hence our Virgins of the Sun, and our Knights of the Cross, malicious Saracens in turbans, and copper-coloured Chiefs in wampum, and so many other truculent figures from the heroic times or the heroic climates, who on all hands swarm in our poetry. Peace be with them! But yet, as a great moralist proposed preaching to the men of this century, so would we fain preach to the poets, "a sermon on the duty of staying at home." Let them be sure that heroic ages and heroic climates can do little for them. That form of life has attraction for us, less because it is better or nobler than our own, than simply because it is different; and even this attraction must be of the most transient sort. For will not our own age, one day, be an ancient one; and have as quaint a costume as the rest; not contrasted with the rest, therefore, but ranked along with them, in respect of quaintness? Does Homer interest us now, because he wrote of what passed beyond his native Greece, and two centuries before he was born; or because he wrote what passed in God's world, and in the heart of man, which is the same after thirty centuries? Let our poets look to this: is their feeling really finer, truer, and their vision deeper than that of other men,—they have nothing to fear, even from the humblest subject; is it not so,—they have nothing to hope, but an ephemeral favour, even from the highest.

15. The poet, we imagine, can never have far to seek for a subject: the elements of his art are in him, and around him on every hand; for him the Ideal world is not remote from the Actual, but under it and within it: nay, he is a

poet, precisely because he can discern it there. Wherever there is a sky above him, and a world around him, the poet is in his place; for here too is man's existence, with its infinite longings and small acquirings; its ever-thwarted, ever-renewed endeavours; its unspeakable aspirations, its fears and hopes that wander through Eternity; and all the mystery of brightness and of gloom that it was ever made of, in any age or climate, since man first began to live. Is there not the fifth act of a Tragedy in every death-bed, though it were a peasant's and a bed of heath? And are wooings and weddings obsolete, that there can be Comedy no longer? Or are men suddenly grown wise, that Laughter must no longer shake his sides, but be cheated of his Farce? Man's life and nature is, as it was, and as it will ever be. But the poet must have an eye to read these things, and a heart to understand them; or they come and pass away before him in vain. He is a *vates*, a seer; a gift of vision has been given him. Has life no meanings for him, which another cannot equally decipher; then he is no poet, and Delphi itself will not make him one.

16. In this respect, Burns, though not perhaps absolutely a great poet, better manifests his capability, better proves the truth of his genius, than if he had by his own strength kept the whole Minerva Press going, to the end of his literary course. He shows himself at least a poet of Nature's own making; and Nature, after all, is still the grand agent in making poets. We often hear of this and the other external condition being requisite for the existence of a poet. Sometimes it is a certain sort of training; he must have studied certain things, studied for instance "the elder dramatists," and so learned a *poetic* language; as if poetry lay in the tongue, not in the heart. At other times we are told he must be bred in a certain rank, and must be on a confidential footing with the higher classes; because, above all things, he must see the world. As to

seeing the world, we apprehend this will cause him little difficulty, if he have but eyesight to see it with. Without eyesight, indeed, the task might be hard. The blind or the purblind man "travels from Dan to Beersheba, and finds it all barren." But happily every poet is born *in* the world; and sees it, with or against his will, every day and every hour he lives. The mysterious workmanship of man's heart, the true light and the inscrutable darkness of man's destiny, reveal themselves not only in capital cities and crowded saloons, but in every hut and hamlet where men have their abode. Nay, do not the elements of all human virtues and all human vices; the passions at once of a Borgia and of a Luther, lie written, in stronger or fainter lines, in the consciousness of every individual bosom, that has practised honest self-examination? Truly this same world may be seen in Mossgiel and Tarbolton, if we look well, as clearly as it ever came to light in Crockford's, or the Tuileries itself.

17. But sometimes still harder requisitions are laid on the poor aspirant to poetry; for it is hinted that he should have *been born* two centuries ago; inasmuch as poetry, about that date, vanished from the earth, and became no longer attainable by men! Such cobweb speculations have, now and then, overhung the field of literature; but they obstruct not the growth of any plant there: the Shakspeare or the Burns, unconsciously and merely as he walks onward, silently brushes them away. Is not every genius an impossibility till he appear? Why do we call him new and original, if *we* saw where his marble was lying, and what [illegible] he would rear from it? It is not the material but the workman that is wanting. It is not the dark *place* that hinders, but the dim *eye*. A Scottish peasant's life was the meanest and rudest of all lives, till Burns became a poet in it, and a poet of it; found it a *man's* life, and therefore significant to men. A thousand battle-fields re-

main unsung; but the *Wounded Hare* has not perished without its memorial; a balm of mercy yet breathes on us from its dumb agonies, because a poet was there. Our *Halloween* had passed and repassed, in rude awe and laughter, since the era of the Druids; but no Theocritus, till Burns, discerned in it the materials of a Scottish Idyl: neither was the *Holy Fair* any *Council of Trent* or Roman *Jubilee;* but nevertheless, *Superstition* and *Hypocrisy* and *Fun* having been propitious to him, in this man's hand it became a poem, instinct with satire and genuine comic life. "Let but the true poet be given us, we repeat it, place him where and how you will, and true poetry will not be wanting."

18. Independently of the essential gift of poetic feeling, as we have now attempted to describe it, a certain rugged sterling worth pervades whatever Burns has written; a virtue, as of green fields and mountain breezes, dwells in his poetry; it is redolent of natural life and hardy natural men. There is a decisive strength in him, and yet a sweet native gracefulness: he is tender, he is vehement, yet without constraint or too visible effort; he melts the heart, or inflames it, with a power which seems habitual and familiar to him. We see that in this man there was the gentleness, the trembling pity of a woman, with the deep earnestness, the force and passionate ardour of a hero. Tears lie in him, and consuming fire; as lightning lurks in the drops of the summer cloud. He has a resonance in his bosom for every note of human feeling; the high and the low, the sad, the ludicrous, the joyful, are welcome in their turns to his "lightly-moved and all-conceiving spirit." And observe with what a fierce prompt force he grasps his subject, be it what it may! How he fixes, as it were, the full image of the matter in his eye; full and clear in every lineament; and catches the real type and essence of it, amid a thousand accidents and superficial circumstances,

no one of which misleads him! Is it of reason; some truth to be discovered? No sophistry, no vain surface-logic detains him; quick, resolute, unerring, he pierces through into the marrow of the question; and speaks his verdict with an emphasis that cannot be forgotten. Is it of description; some visual object to be represented? No poet of any age or nation is more graphic than Burns: the characteristic features disclose themselves to him at a glance; three lines from his hand, and we have a likeness. And, in that rough dialect, in that rude, often awkward metre, so clear and definite a likeness! It seems a draughtsman working with a burnt stick; and yet the burin of a Retzsch is not more expressive or exact.

19. Of this last excellence, the plainest and most comprehensive of all, being indeed the root and foundation of *every* sort of talent, poetical or intellectual, we could produce innumerable instances from the writings of Burns. Take these glimpses of a snow-storm from his "Winter Night" (the italics are ours);

> When biting Boreas, fell and doure,
> *Sharp shivers* thro' the leafless bow'r,
> And Phœbus *gies a short-liv'd glowr*
> *Far south the lift,*
> *Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r*
> *Or whirling drift:*
>
> 'Ae night the storm the steeples rock'd,
> Poor labour sweet in sleep was lock'd,
> While burns *wi' snawy wreeths upchok'd*
> *Wild-eddying swhirl,*
> Or thro' the mining outlet bock'd,
> Down headlong hurl.

Are there not "descriptive touches" here? The describer *saw* this thing; the essential feature and true likeness of every circumstance in it; saw, and not with the eye only.

"Poor labour locked in sweet sleep;" the dead stillness of man, unconscious, vanquished, yet not unprotected, while such strife of the material elements rages, and seems to reign supreme in loneliness: this is of the heart as well as of the eye!—Look also at his image of a thaw, and prophesied fall of the "Auld Brig:"

> When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains
> Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
> When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
> Or stately Lugar's *mossy* fountains *boil*,
> Or where the Greenock winds his *moorland* course,
> Or haunted Garpal[1] draws his feeble source,
> Arous'd by blust'ring winds and *spotting* thowes,
> *In mony a torrent down his snaw-broo rowes;*
> *While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,*
> *Sweeps dams and mills and brigs a' to the gate;*
> And from Glenbuck down to the Rottonkey,
> Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd *tumbling* sea;
> Then down ye'll hurl, Deil nor ye never rise!
> And *dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies.*

The last line is in itself a Poussin-picture of that Deluge! The welkin has, as it were, bent down with its weight; the "gumlie jaups" and the "pouring skies" are mingled together; it is a world of rain and ruin.—In respect of mere clearness and minute fidelity, the "Farmer's" commendation of his "Auld Mare," in plough or in cart, may vie with Homer's Smithy of the Cyclops, or yoking of Priam's Chariot. Nor have we forgotten stout "Burn-the-wind" and his brawny customers, inspired by "Scotch Drink:" but it is needless to multiply examples. One other trait of a much finer sort we select from multitudes of such among his "Songs." It gives, in a single line, to the saddest feeling the saddest environment and local habitation:

[1] *Fabulosus* Hydaspes!—*Carlyle's note.*

The pale Moon is setting beyond the white wave,
And Time is setting wi' me, O;
Farewell, false friends! false lover, farewell!
I'll nae mair trouble them nor thee, O.

20. This clearness of sight we have called the foundation of all talent; for in fact, unless we *see* our object, how shall we know how to place or prize it, in our understanding, our imagination, our affections? Yet it is not in itself, perhaps, a very high excellence; but capable of being united indifferently with the strongest, or with ordinary power. Homer surpasses all men in this quality: but strangely enough, at no great distance below him are Richardson and Defoe. It belongs, in truth, to what is called a lively mind; and gives no sure indication of the higher endowments that may exist along with it. In all the three cases we have mentioned, it is combined with great garrulity; their descriptions are detailed, ample and lovingly exact; Homer's fire bursts through, from time to time, as if by accident; but Defoe and Richardson have no fire. Burns, again, is not more distinguished by the clearness than by the impetuous force of his conceptions. Of the strength, the piercing emphasis with which he thought, his emphasis of expression may give a humble but the readiest proof. Who ever uttered sharper sayings than his; words more memorable, now by their burning vehemence, now by their cool vigour and laconic pith? A single phrase depicts a whole subject, a whole scene. We hear of "a gentleman that derived his patent of nobility direct from Almighty God." Our Scottish forefathers in the battle-field struggled forward "*red-wat-shod:*" in this one word a full vision of horror and carnage, perhaps too frightfully accurate for Art!

21. In fact, one of the leading features in the mind of Burns is this vigour of his strictly intellectual perceptions.

A resolute force is ever visible in his judgments, and in his feelings and volitions. Professor Stewart says of him, with some surprise: "All the faculties of Burns's mind were, as far as I could judge, equally vigorous; and his predilection for poetry was rather the result of his own enthusiastic and impassioned temper, than of a genius exclusively adapted to that species of composition. From his conversation I should have pronounced him to be fitted to excel in whatever walk of ambition he had chosen to exert his abilities." But this, if we mistake not, is at all times the very essence of a truly poetical endowment. Poetry, except in such cases as that of Keats, where the whole consists in a weak-eyed maudlin sensibility, and a certain vague random tunefulness of nature, is no separate faculty, no organ which can be superadded to the rest, or disjoined from them; but rather the result of their general harmony and completion. The feelings, the gifts that exist in the Poet are those that exist, with more or less development, in every human soul: the imagination, which shudders at the Hell of Dante, is the same faculty, weaker in degree, which called that picture into being. How does the Poet speak to men, with power, but by being still more a man than they? Shakspeare, it has been well observed, in the planning and completing of his tragedies, has shown an Understanding, were it nothing more, which might have governed states, or indited a "*Novum Organum.*" What Burns's force of understanding may have been, we have less means of judging: it had to dwell among the humblest objects; never saw Philosophy; never rose, except by natural effort and for short intervals, into the region of great ideas. Nevertheless, sufficient indication, if no proof sufficient, remains for us in his works: we discern the brawny movements of a gigantic though untutored strength; and can understand how, in conversation, his quick sure insight into men and things may, as much

as aught else about him, have amazed the best thinkers of his time and country.

22. But, unless we mistake, the intellectual gift of Burns is fine as well as strong. The more delicate relations of things could not well have escaped his eye, for they were intimately present to his heart. The logic of the senate and the forum is indispensable, but not all-sufficient; nay perhaps the highest Truth is that which will the most certainly elude it. For this logic works by words, and "the highest," it has been said, "cannot be expressed in words." We are not without tokens of an openness for this higher truth also, of a keen though uncultivated sense for it, having existed in Burns. Mr. Stewart, it will be remembered, "wonders," in the passage above quoted, that Burns had formed some distinct conception of the "doctrine of association." We rather think that far subtler things than the doctrine of association had from of old been familiar to him. Here for instance:

23. "We know nothing," thus writes he, "or next to nothing, of the structure of our souls, so we cannot account for those seeming caprices in them, that one should be particularly pleased with this thing, or struck with that, which, on minds of a different cast, makes no extraordinary impression. I have some favourite flowers in spring, among which are the mountain-daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild-brier rose, the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of gray plover in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing? Are we a piece of machinery, which, like the Æolian harp, passive, takes the impression of the passing accident; or do these workings argue something within us above the trodden clod? I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful and important realities: a God that made

all things, man's immaterial and immortal nature, and a world of weal or wo beyond death and the grave."

24. Force and fineness of understanding are often spoken of as something different from general force and fineness of nature, as something partly independent of them. The necessities of language so require it; but in truth these qualities are not distinct and independent: except in special cases, and from special causes, they ever go together. A man of strong understanding is generally a man of strong character; neither is delicacy in the one kind often divided from delicacy in the other. No one, at all events, is ignorant that in the Poetry of Burns keenness of insight keeps pace with keenness of feeling; that his *light* is not more pervading than his *warmth*. He is a man of the most impassioned temper; with passions not strong only, but noble, and of the sort in which great virtues and great poems take their rise. It is reverence, it is love towards all Nature that inspires him, that opens his eyes to its beauty, and makes heart and voice eloquent in its praise. There is a true old saying, that "Love furthers knowledge:" but above all, it is the living essence of that knowledge which makes poets; the first principle of its existence, increase, activity. Of Burns's fervid affection, his generous all-embracing Love, we have spoken already, as of the grand distinction of his nature, seen equally in word and deed, in his Life and in his Writings. It were easy to multiply examples. Not man only, but all that environs man in the material and moral universe, is lovely in his sight: "the hoary hawthorn," the "troop of gray plover," the "solitary curlew," all are dear to him; all live in this Earth along with him, and to all he is knit as in mysterious brotherhood. How touching is it, for instance, that, amidst the gloom of personal misery, brooding over the wintry desolation without him and within him, he thinks

of the "ourie cattle" and "silly sheep," and their sufferings in the pitiless storm!

> I thought me on the ourie cattle,
> Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
> O' wintry war,
> Or thro' the drift, deep-lairing, spratt'le,
> Beneath a scaur.
> Ilk happing bird, wee helpless thing,
> That in the merry months o' spring
> Delighted me to hear thee sing,
> What comes o' thee?
> Where wilt thou cow'r thy chittering wing,
> And close thy ee?

The tenant of the mean hut, with its "ragged roof and chinky wall," has a heart to pity even these! This is worth several homilies on Mercy; for it is the voice of Mercy herself. Burns, indeed, lives in sympathy; his soul rushes forth into all realms of being; nothing that has existence can be indifferent to him. The very Devil he cannot hate with right orthodoxy:

> But fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben;
> O, wad ye tak a thought and men'!
> Ye aiblins might,—I dinna ken,—
> Still hae a stake;
> I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
> Even for your sake!

"*He* is the father of curses and lies," said Dr. Slop; "and is cursed and damned already."—"I am sorry for it," quoth my uncle Toby!—a Poet without Love were a physical and metaphysical impossibility.

25. But has it not been said, in contradiction to this principle, that "Indignation makes verses"? It has been so said, and is true enough: but the contradiction is apparent, not real. The Indignation which makes verses is, properly speaking, an inverted Love; the love of some

right, some worth, some goodness, belonging to ourselves or others, which has been injured, and which this tempestuous feeling issues forth to defend and avenge. No selfish fury of heart, existing there as a primary feeling, and without its opposite, ever produced much Poetry: otherwise, we suppose, the Tiger were the most musical of all our choristers. Johnson said, he loved a good hater; by which he must have meant, not so much one that hated violently, as one that hated wisely; hated baseness from love of nobleness. However, in spite of Johnson's paradox, tolerable enough for once in speech, but which need not have been so often adopted in print since then, we rather believe that good men deal sparingly in hatred, either wise or unwise: nay that a "good" hater is still a desideratum in this world. The Devil, at least, who passes for the chief and best of that class, is said to be nowise an amiable character.

26. Of the verses which Indignation makes, Burns has also given us specimens: and among the best that were ever given. Who will forget his "Dweller in yon Dungeon dark;" a piece that might have been chanted by the Furies of Æschylus? The secrets of the Infernal Pit are laid bare; a boundless baleful "darkness visible;" and streaks of hell-fire quivering madly in its black haggard bosom!

> Dweller in yon Dungeon dark,
> Hangman of Creation, mark!
> Who in widow's weeds appears,
> Laden with unhonoured years,
> Noosing with care a bursting purse,
> Baited with many a deadly curse!

27. Why should we speak of "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled"; since all know of it, from the king to the meanest of his subjects? This dithyrambic was composed on horseback; in riding in the middle of temposts, over

the wildest Galloway moor, in company with a Mr. Syme, who, observing the poet's looks, forbore to speak,—judiciously enough, for a man composing "Bruce's Address" might be unsafe to trifle with. Doubtless this stern hymn was singing itself, as he formed it, through the soul of Burns: but to the external ear, it should be sung with the throat of the whirlwind. So long as there is warm blood in the heart of Scotchman or man, it will move in fierce thrills under this war-ode; the best, we believe, that was ever written by any pen.

28. Another wild stormful Song, that dwells in our ear and mind with a strange tenacity, is "Macpherson's Farewell." Perhaps there is something in the tradition itself that coöperates. For was not this grim Celt, this shaggy Northland Cacus, that "lived a life of sturt and strife, and died by treacherie,"—was not he too one of the Nimrods and Napoleons of the earth, in the arena of his own remote misty glens, for want of a clearer and wider one? Nay, was there not a touch of grace given him? A fibre of love and softness, of poetry itself, must have lived in his savage heart: for he composed that air the night before his execution; on the wings of that poor melody his better soul would soar away above oblivion, pain and all the ignominy and despair, which, like an avalanche, was hurling him to the abyss! Here also, as at Thebes, and in Pelops' line, was material Fate matched against man's Free-will; matched in bitterest though obscure duel; and the ethereal soul sank not, even in its blindness, without a cry which has survived it. But who, except Burns, could have given words to such a soul; words that we never listen to without a strange half-barbarous, half-poetic fellow-feeling?

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He play'd a spring, and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

29. Under a lighter disguise, the same principle of Love, which we have recognised as the great characteristic of Burns, and of all true poets, occasionally manifests itself in the shape of Humour. Everywhere, indeed, in his sunny moods, a full buoyant flood of mirth rolls through the mind of Burns; he rises to the high, and stoops to the low, and is brother and playmate to all Nature. We speak not of his bold and often irresistible faculty of caricature; for this is Drollery rather than Humour: but a much tenderer sportfulness dwells in him; and comes forth here and there, in evanescent and beautiful touches; as in his "Address to the Mouse," or the "Farmer's Mare," or in his "Elegy on poor Mailie," which last may be reckoned his happiest effort of this kind. In these pieces there are traits of a Humour as fine as that of Sterne; yet altogether different, original, peculiar,—the Humour of Burns.

IV. 30. Of the tenderness, the playful pathos, and many other kindred qualities of Burns's Poetry, much more might be said; but now, with these poor outlines of a sketch, we must prepare to quit this part of our subject. To speak of his individual Writings, adequately and with any detail, would lead us far beyond our limits. As already hinted, we can look on but few of these pieces as, in strict critical language, deserving the name of Poems: they are rhymed eloquence, rhymed pathos, rhymed sense; yet seldom essentially melodious, aerial, poetical. "Tam o' Shanter" itself, which enjoys so high a favour, does not appear to us at all decisively to come under this last category. It is not so much a poem, as a piece of sparkling rhetoric; the heart and body of the story still lies hard and dead. He has not gone back, much less carried us back, into that dark, earnest, wondering age, when the tradition was believed, and when it took its rise; he does not attempt, by any new-modelling of his supernatural ware, to strike

anew that deep mysterious chord of human nature, which once responded to such things; and which lives in us too, and will forever live, though silent now, or vibrating with far other notes, and to far different issues. Our German readers will understand us, when we say, that he is not the Tieck but the Musäus of this tale. Externally it is all green and living; yet look closer, it is no firm growth, but only ivy on a rock. The piece does not properly cohere: the strange chasm which yawns in our incredulous imaginations between the Ayr public-house and the gate of Tophet, is nowhere bridged over, nay the idea of such a bridge is laughed at; and thus the Tragedy of the adventure becomes a mere drunken phantasmagoria, or many-coloured spectrum painted on ale-vapours, and the Farce alone has any reality. We do not say that Burns should have made much more of this tradition; we rather think that, for strictly poetical purposes, not much *was* to be made of it. Neither are we blind to the deep, varied, genial power displayed in what he has actually accomplished; but we find far more "Shakspearean" qualities, as these of "Tam o' Shanter" have been fondly named, in many of his other pieces; nay we incline to believe that this latter might have been written, all but quite as well, by a man who, in place of genius, had only possessed talent.

31. Perhaps we may venture to say, that the most strictly poetical of all his "poems" is one which does not appear in Currie's Edition; but has been often printed before and since, under the humble title of "The Jolly Beggars." The subject truly is among the lowest in nature; but it only the more shows our Poet's gift in raising it into the domain of Art. To our minds, this piece seems thoroughly compacted; melted together, refined; and poured forth in one flood of true *liquid* harmony. It is light, airy, soft of movement; yet sharp and precise in its details; every face is a portrait: that "raucle carlin," that "wee

Apollo," that "Son of Mars," are Scottish, yet ideal; the scene is at once a dream, and the very Ragcastle of "Poosie-Nansie." Farther, it seems in a considerable degree complete, a real self-supporting Whole, which is the highest merit in a poem. The blanket of the Night is drawn asunder for a moment; in full, ruddy, flaming light, these rough tatterdemalions are seen in their boisterous revel; for the strong pulse of Life vindicates its right to gladness even here; and when the curtain closes, we prolong the action, without effort; the next day as the last, our "Caird" and our "Balladmonger" are singing and soldiering; their "brats and callets" are hawking, begging, cheating; and some other night, in new combinations, they will wring from Fate another hour of wassail and good cheer. Apart from the universal sympathy with man which this again bespeaks in Burns, a genuine inspiration and no inconsiderable technical talent are manifested here. There is the fidelity, humour, warm life and accurate painting and grouping of some Teniers, for whom hostlers and carousing peasants are not without significance. It would be strange, doubtless, to call this the best of Burns's writings: we mean to say only, that it seems to us the most perfect of its kind, as a piece of poetical composition, strictly so called. In the "Beggars' Opera," in the "Beggars' Bush," as other critics have already remarked, there is nothing which, in real poetic vigour, equals this "Cantata;" nothing, as we think, which comes within many degrees of it.

32. But by far the most finished, complete and truly inspired pieces of Burns are, without dispute, to be found among his "Songs." It is here that, although through a small aperture, his light shines with least obstruction; in its highest beauty and pure sunny clearness. The reason may be, that Song is a brief simple species of composition;

and requires nothing so much for its perfection as genuine poetic feeling, genuine music of heart. Yet the Song has its rules equally with the Tragedy; rules which in most cases are poorly fulfilled, in many cases are not so much as felt. We might write a long essay on the Songs of Burns; which we reckon by far the best that Britain has yet produced: for indeed, since the era of Queen Elizabeth, we know not that, by any other hand, aught truly worth attention has been accomplished in this department. True, we have songs enough "by persons of quality;" we have tawdry, hollow, wine-bred madrigals; many a rhymed speech "in the flowing and watery vein of Ossorius the Portugal Bishop," rich in sonorous words, and, for moral, dashed perhaps with some tint of a sentimental sensuality; all which many persons cease not from endeavouring to sing; though for most part, we fear, the music is but from the throat outwards, or at best from some region far enough short of the *Soul;* not in which, but in a certain inane Limbo of the Fancy, or even in some vaporous debateable-land on the outskirts of the Nervous System, most of such madrigals and rhymed speeches seem to have originated.

33. With the Songs of Burns we must not name these things. Independently of the clear, manly, heartfelt sentiment that ever pervades *his* poetry, his Songs are honest in another point of view: in form, as well as in spirit. They do not *affect* to be set to music, but they actually and in themselves are music; they have received their life, and fashioned themselves together, in the medium of Harmony, as Venus rose from the bosom of the sea. The story, the feeling, is not detailed, but suggested; not *said*, or spouted, in rhetorical completeness and coherence; but *sung*, in fitful gushes, in glowing hints, in fantastic breaks, in *warblings* not of the voice only, but of the whole mind. We consider this to be the essence of a song; and that no song since the little careless catches, and as it were drops

of song, which Shakspeare has here and there sprinkled over his plays, fulfil this condition in nearly the same degree as most of Burns's do. Such grace and truth of external movement, too, presupposes in general a corresponding force and truth of sentiment and inward meaning. The Songs of Burns are not more perfect in the former quality than in the latter. With what tenderness he sings, yet with what vehemence and entireness! There is a piercing wail in his sorrow, the purest rapture in his joy; he burns with the sternest ire, or laughs with the loudest or sliest mirth; and yet he is sweet and soft, "sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, and soft as their parting tear." If we farther take into account the immense variety of his subjects; how, from the loud flowing revel in "Willie brew'd a Peck o' Maut," to the still, rapt enthusiasm of sadness for "Mary in Heaven;" from the glad kind greeting of "Auld Langsyne," or the comic archness of "Duncan Gray," to the fire-eyed fury of "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," he has found a tone and words for every mood of man's heart,—it will seem a small praise if we rank him as the first of all our Song-writers; for we know not where to find one worthy of being second to him.

34. It is on his Songs, as we believe, that Burns's chief influence as an author will ultimately be found to depend: nor, if our Fletcher's aphorism is true, shall we account this a small influence. "Let me make the songs of a people," said he, "and you shall make its laws." Surely, if ever any Poet might have equalled himself with Legislators on this ground, it was Burns. His Songs are already part of the mother-tongue, not of Scotland only but of Britain, and of the millions that in all ends of the earth speak a British language. In hut and hall, as the heart unfolds itself in many-coloured joy and woe of existence, the *name*, the *voice* of that joy and that woe, is the name and voice which Burns has given them. Strictly speaking,

perhaps no British man has so deeply affected the thoughts and feelings of so many men, as this solitary and altogether private individual, with means apparently the humblest.

35. In another point of view, moreover, we incline to think that Burns's influence may have been considerable: we mean, as exerted specially on the Literature of his country, at least on the Literature of Scotland. Among the great changes which British, particularly Scottish literature, has undergone since that period, one of the greatest will be found to consist in its remarkable increase of nationality. Even the English writers, most popular in Burns's time, were little distinguished for their literary patriotism, in this its best sense. A certain attenuated cosmopolitanism had, in good measure, taken place of the old insular home-feeling; literature was, as it were, without any local environment; was not nourished by the affections which spring from a native soil. Our Grays and Glovers seemed to write almost as if *in vacuo;* the thing written bears no mark of place; it is not written so much for Englishmen, as for men; or rather, which is the inevitable result of this, for certain Generalisations which philosophy termed men. Goldsmith is an exception: not so Johnson; the scene of his "Rambler" is little more English than that of his "Rasselas."

36. But if such was, in some degree, the case with England, it was, in the highest degree, the case with Scotland. In fact, our Scottish literature had, at that period, a very singular aspect; unexampled, so far as we know, except perhaps at Geneva, where the same state of matters appears still to continue. For a long period after Scotland became British, we had no literature: at the date when Addison and Steele were writing their "Spectators," our good John Boston was writing, with the noblest intent, but alike in defiance of grammar and philosophy, his "Fourfold State of Man." Then came the schisms in our National Church,

and the fiercer schisms in our Body Politic; Theologic ink, and Jacobite blood, with gall enough in both cases, seemed to have blotted out the intellect of the country: however, it was only obscured, not obliterated. Lord Kames made nearly the first attempt at writing English; and ere long, Hume, Robertson, Smith, and a whole host of followers, attracted hither the eyes of all Europe. And yet in this brilliant resuscitation of our "fervid genius," there was nothing truly Scottish, nothing indigenous; except, perhaps, the natural impetuosity of intellect, which we sometimes claim, and are sometimes upbraided with, as a characteristic of our nation. It is curious to remark that Scotland, so full of writers, had no Scottish culture, nor indeed any English; our culture was almost exclusively French. It was by studying Racine and Voltaire, Batteux and Boileau, that Kames had trained himself to be a critic and philosopher; it was the light of Montesquieu and Mably that guided Robertson in his political speculations; Quesnay's lamp that kindled the lamp of Adam Smith. Hume was too rich a man to borrow; and perhaps he reacted on the French more than he was acted on by them: but neither had he aught to do with Scotland; Edinburgh, equally with La Flèche, was but the lodging and laboratory, in which he not so much morally *lived*, as metaphysically *investigated*. Never, perhaps, was there a class of writers so clear and well-ordered, yet so totally destitute, to all appearance, of any patriotic affection, nay of any human affection whatever. The French wits of the period were as unpatriotic: but their general deficiency in moral principle, not to say their avowed sensuality and unbelief in all virtue, strictly so called, render this accountable enough. We hope, there is a patriotism founded on something better than prejudice; that our country may be dear to us, without injury to our philosophy; that in loving and justly prizing all other lands, we may prize justly, and yet love be-

fore all others, our own stern Motherland, and the venerable Structure of social and moral Life, which Mind has through long ages been building up for us there. Surely there is nourishment for the better part of man's heart in all this: surely the roots, that have fixed themselves in the very core of man's being, may be so cultivated as to grow up not into briers, but into roses, in the field of his life! Our Scottish sages have no such propensities: the field of their life shows neither briers nor roses; but only a flat, continuous thrashing-floor for Logic, whereon all questions, from the "Doctrine of Rent" to the "Natural History of Religion," are thrashed and sifted with the same mechanical impartiality!

37. With Sir Walter Scott at the head of our literature, it cannot be denied that much of this evil is past, or rapidly passing away: our chief literary men, whatever other faults they may have, no longer live among us like a French Colony, or some knot of Propaganda Missionaries; but like natural-born subjects of the soil, partaking and sympathising in all our attachments, humours and habits. Our literature no longer grows in water but in mould, and with the true racy virtues of the soil and climate. How much of this change may be due to Burns, or to any other individual, it might be difficult to estimate. Direct literary imitation of Burns was not to be looked for. But his example, in the fearless adoption of domestic subjects, could not but operate from afar; and certainly in no heart did the love of country ever burn with a warmer glow than in that of Burns: "a tide of Scottish prejudice," as he modestly calls this deep and generous feeling, "had been poured along his veins; and he felt that it would boil there till the flood-gates shut in eternal rest." It seemed to him, as if *he* could do so little for his country, and yet would so gladly have done all. One small province stood open for him,—that of Scottish Song; and how eagerly he entered on it, how devotedly he laboured there! In his

toilsome journeyings, this object never quits him; it is the little happy-valley of his careworn heart. In the gloom of his own affliction, he eagerly searches after some lonely brother of the muse, and rejoices to snatch one other name from the oblivion that was covering it! These were early feelings, and they abode with him to the end:

> . . . A wish (I mind its power),
> A wish, that to my latest hour
> Will strongly heave my breast,—
> That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
> Some useful plan or book could make,
> Or sing a sang at least.
>
> The rough bur Thistle spreading wide
> Amang the bearded bear,
> I turn'd my weeding-clips aside,
> And spared the symbol dear.

V. 38. But to leave the mere literary character of Burns, which has already detained us too long. Far more interesting than any of his written works, as it appears to us, are his acted ones: the Life he willed and was fated to lead among his fellow-men. These Poems are but like little rhymed fragments scattered here and there in the grand unrhymed Romance of his earthly existence; and it is only when intercalated in this at their proper places, that they attain their full measure of significance. And this, too, alas, was but a fragment! The plan of a mighty edifice had been sketched; some columns, porticos, firm masses of building, stand completed; the rest more or less clearly indicated; with many a far-stretching tendency, which only studious and friendly eyes can now trace towards the purposed termination. For the work is broken off in the middle, almost in the beginning; and rises among us, beautiful and sad, at once unfinished and a ruin! If charitable judgment was necessary in estimating his Poems,

and justice required that the aim and the manifest power to fulfil it must often be accepted for the fulfilment; much more is this the case in regard to his Life, the sum and result of all his endeavours, where his difficulties came upon him not in detail only, but in mass; and so much has been left unaccomplished, nay was mistaken, and altogether marred.

39. Properly speaking, there is but one era in the life of Burns, and that the earliest. We have not youth and manhood, but only youth: for, to the end, we discern no decisive change in the complexion of his character; in his thirty-seventh year, he is still, as it were, in youth. With all that resoluteness of judgment, that penetrating insight, and singular maturity of intellectual power, exhibited in his writings, he never attains to any clearness regarding himself; to the last, he never ascertains his peculiar aim, even with such distinctness as is common among ordinary men; and therefore never can pursue it with that singleness of will, which insures success and some contentment to such men. To the last, he wavers between two purposes: glorying in his talent, like a true poet, he yet cannot consent to make this his chief and sole glory, and to follow it as the one thing needful, through poverty or riches, through good or evil report. Another far meaner ambition still cleaves to him; he must dream and struggle about a certain "Rock of Independence;" which, natural and even admirable as it might be, was still but a warring with the world, on the comparatively insignificant ground of his being more completely or less completely supplied with money than others; of his standing at a higher or at a lower altitude in general estimation than others. For the world still appears to him, as to the young, in borrowed colours: he expects from it what it cannot give to any man; seeks for contentment, not within himself, in action and wise effort, but from without, in the kindness

of circumstances, in love, friendship, honour, pecuniary ease. He would be happy, not actively and in himself, but passively and from some ideal cornucopia of Enjoyments, not earned by his own labour, but showered on him by the beneficence of Destiny. Thus, like a young man, he cannot gird himself up for any worthy well-calculated goal, but swerves to and fro, between passionate hope and remorseful disappointment: rushing onwards with a deep tempestuous force, he surmounts or breaks asunder many a barrier; travels, nay advances far, but advancing only under uncertain guidance, is ever and anon turned from his path; and to the last cannot reach the only true happiness of a man, that of clear decided Activity in the sphere for which, by nature and circumstances, he has been fitted and appointed.

40. We do not say these things in dispraise of Burns; nay, perhaps, they but interest us the more in his favour. This blessing is not given soonest to the best; but rather, it is often the greatest minds that are latest in obtaining it; for where most is to be developed, most time may be required to develop it. A complex condition had been assigned him from without; as complex a condition from within: no "preëstablished harmony" existed between the clay soil of Mossgiel and the empyrean soul of Robert Burns; it was not wonderful that the adjustment between them should have been long postponed, and his arm long cumbered, and his sight confused, in so vast and discordant an economy as he had been appointed steward over. Byron was, at his death, but a year younger than Burns; and through life, as it might have appeared, far more simply situated: yet in him too we can trace no such adjustment, no such moral manhood; but at best, and only a little before his end, the beginning of what seemed such.

41. By much the most striking incident in Burns's Life is his journey to Edinburgh; but perhaps a still more

important one is his residence at Irvine, so early as in his twenty-third year. Hitherto his life had been poor and toilworn; but otherwise not ungenial, and, with all its distresses, by no means unhappy. In his parentage, deducting outward circumstances, he had every reason to reckon himself fortunate. His father was a man of thoughtful, intense, earnest character, as the best of our peasants are; valuing knowledge, possessing some, and what is far better and rarer, openminded for more: a man with a keen insight and devout heart; reverent towards God, friendly therefore at once, and fearless towards all that God has made: in one word, though but a hard-handed peasant, a complete and fully unfolded *Man*. Such a father is seldom found in any rank in society; and was worth descending far in society to seek. Unfortunately, he was very poor; had he been even a little richer, almost never so little, the whole might have issued far otherwise. Mighty events turn on a straw; the crossing of a brook decides the conquest of the world. Had this William Burns's small seven acres of nursery-ground anywise prospered, the boy Robert had been sent to school; had struggled forward, as so many weaker men do, to some university; come forth not as a rustic wonder, but as a regular well-trained intellectual workman, and changed the whole course of British Literature,—for it lay in him to have done this! But the nursery did not prosper; poverty sank his whole family below the help of even our cheap school-system: Burns remained a hard-worked ploughboy, and British literature took its own course. Nevertheless, even in this rugged scene there is much to nourish him. If he drudges, it is with his brother, and for his father and mother, whom he loves, and would fain shield from want. Wisdom is not banished from their poor hearth, nor the balm of natural feeling: the solemn words, *Let us worship God,* are heard there from a "priest-like father;" if threatenings of un-

just men throw mother and children into tears, these are tears not of grief only, but of holiest affection; every heart in that humble group feels itself the closer knit to every other; in their hard warfare they are there together, a "little band of brethren." Neither are such tears, and the deep beauty that dwells in them, their only portion. Light visits the hearts as it does the eyes of all living: there is a force, too, in this youth, that enables him to trample on misfortune; nay to bind it under his feet to make him sport. For a bold, warm, buoyant humour of character has been given him; and so the thick-coming shapes of evil are welcomed with a gay, friendly irony, and in their closest pressure he bates no jot of heart or hope. Vague yearnings of ambition fail not, as he grows up; dreamy fancies hang like cloud-cities around him; the curtain of Existence is slowly rising, in many-coloured splendour and gloom: and the auroral light of first love is gilding his horizon, and the music of song is on his path; and so he walks

> . . . . . in glory and in joy,
> Behind his plough, upon the mountain side.

42. We ourselves know, from the best evidence, that up to this date Burns was happy; nay that he was the gayest, brightest, most fantastic, fascinating being to be found in the world; more so even than he ever afterwards appeared. But now, at this early age, he quits the paternal roof; goes forth into looser, louder, more exciting society; and becomes initiated in those dissipations, those vices, which a certain class of philosophers have asserted to be a natural preparative for entering on active life; a kind of mud-bath, in which the youth is, as it were, necessitated to steep, and, we suppose, cleanse himself, before the real toga of Manhood can be laid on him. We shall not dispute much with this class of philosophers; we hope they are mistaken:

for Sin and Remorse so easily beset us at all stages of life, and are always such indifferent company, that it seems hard we should, at any stage, be forced and fated not only to meet but to yield to them, and even serve for a term in their leprous armada. We hope it is not so. Clear we are, at all events, it cannot be the training one receives in this Devil's service, but only our determining to desert from it, that fits us for true manly Action. We become men, not after we have been dissipated, and disappointed in the chase of false pleasure; but after we have ascertained, in any way, what impassable barriers hem us in through this life; how mad it is to hope for contentment to our infinite soul from the *gifts* of this extremely finite world; that a man must be sufficient for himself; and that for suffering and enduring there is no remedy but striving and doing. Manhood begins when we have in any way made truce with Necessity; begins even when we have surrendered to Necessity, as the most part only do; but begins joyfully and hopefully only when we have reconciled ourselves to Necessity; and thus, in reality, triumphed over it, and felt that in Necessity we are free. Surely, such lessons as this last, which, in one shape or other, is the grand lesson for every mortal man, are better learned from the lips of a devout mother, in the looks and actions of a devout father, while the heart is yet soft and pliant, than in collision with the sharp adamant of Fate, attracting us to shipwreck us, when the heart is grown hard, and may be broken before it will become contrite. Had Burns continued to learn this, as he was already learning it, in his father's cottage, he would have learned it fully, which he never did; and been saved many a lasting aberration, many a bitter hour and year of remorseful sorrow.

43. It seems to us another circumstance of fatal import in Burns's history, that at this time too he became involved in the religious quarrels of his district; that he was en-

listed and feasted, as the fighting man of the New-Light Priesthood, in their highly unprofitable warfare. At the tables of these free-minded clergy he learned much more than was needful for him. Such liberal ridicule of fanaticism awakened in his mind scruples about Religion itself; and a whole world of Doubts, which it required quite another set of conjurors than these men to exorcise. We do not say that such an intellect as his could have escaped similar doubts at some period of his history; or even that he could, at a later period, have come through them altogether victorious and unharmed: but it seems peculiarly unfortunate that this time, above all others, should have been fixed for the encounter. For now, with principles assailed by evil example from without, by "passions raging like demons" from within, he had little need of sceptical misgivings to whisper treason in the heat of the battle, or to cut off his retreat if he were already defeated. He loses his feeling of innocence; his mind is at variance with itself; the old divinity no longer presides there; but wild Desires and wild Repentance alternately oppress him. Ere long, too, he has committed himself before the world; his character for sobriety, dear to a Scottish peasant as few corrupted worldlings can even conceive, is destroyed in the eyes of men; and his only refuge consists in trying to disbelieve his guiltiness, and is but a refuge of lies. The blackest desperation now gathers over him, broken only by red lightnings of remorse. The whole fabric of his life is blasted asunder; for now not only his character, but his personal liberty, is to be lost; men and Fortune are leagued for his hurt; "hungry Ruin has him in the wind." He sees no escape but the saddest of all: exiled from his loved country, to a country in every sense inhospitable and abhorrent to him. While the "gloomy night is gathering fast," in mental storm and solitude, as well as in physical, he sings his wild farewell to Scotland:

Farewell, my friends; farewell, my foes!
My peace with these, my love with those:
The bursting tears my heart declare;
Adieu, my native banks of Ayr!

44. Light breaks suddenly in on him in floods; but still a false transitory light, and no real sunshine. He is invited to Edinburgh; hastens thither with anticipating heart; is welcomed as in a triumph, and with universal blandishment and acclamation; whatever is wisest, whatever is greatest or loveliest there, gathers round him, to gaze on his face, to show him honour, sympathy, affection. Burns's appearance among the sages and nobles of Edinburgh must be regarded as one of the most singular phenomena in modern Literature; almost like the appearance of some Napoleon among the crowned sovereigns of modern Politics. For it is nowise as "a mockery king," set there by favour, transiently and for a purpose, that he will let himself be treated; still less is he a mad Rienzi, whose sudden elevation turns his too weak head: but he stands there on his own basis; cool, unastonished, holding his equal rank from Nature herself; putting forth no claim which there is not strength *in* him, as well as about him, to vindicate. Mr. Lockhart has some forcible observations on this point:

45. "It needs no effort of imagination," says he, "to conceive what the sensations of an isolated set of scholars (almost all either clergymen or professors) must have been in the presence of this big-boned, black-browed, brawny stranger, with his great flashing eyes, who, having forced his way among them from the plough-tail at a single stride, manifested in the whole strain of his bearing and conversation a most thorough conviction, that in the society of the most eminent men of his nation he was exactly where he was entitled to be; hardly deigned to flatter them by exhibiting even an occasional symptom of being flattered by their notice; by turns calmly measured himself against the

most cultivated understandings of his time in discussion; overpowered the *bonmots* of the most celebrated convivialists by broad floods of merriment, impregnated with all the burning life of genius; astounded bosoms habitually enveloped in the thrice-piled folds of social reserve, by compelling them to tremble,—nay, to tremble visibly,—beneath the fearless touch of natural pathos; and all this without indicating the smallest willingness to be ranked among those professional ministers of excitement, who are content to be paid in money and smiles for doing what the spectators and auditors would be ashamed of doing in their own persons, even if they had the power of doing it; and last, and probably worst of all, who was known to be in the habit of enlivening societies which they would have scorned to approach, still more frequently than their own, with eloquence no less magnificent; with wit, in all likelihood still more daring; often enough, as the superiors whom he fronted without alarm might have guessed from the beginning, and had ere long no occasion to guess, with wit pointed at themselves."

46. The farther we remove from this scene, the more singular will it seem to us: details of the exterior aspect of it are already full of interest. Most readers recollect Mr. Walker's personal interviews with Burns as among the best passages of his Narrative: a time will come when this reminiscence of Sir Walter Scott's, slight though it is, will also be precious:

47. "As for Burns," writes Sir Walter, "I may truly say, *Virgilium vidi tantùm.* I was a lad of fifteen in 1786–7, when he came first to Edinburgh, but had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him: but I had very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most frequented. Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner; but had no opportunity to keep his word; otherwise I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable

Professor Ferguson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dugald Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sat silent, looked and listened. The only thing I remember which was remarkable in Burns's manner, was the effect produced upon him by a print of Bunbury's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow, his dog sitting in misery on one side,—on the other, his widow, with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath:

> 'Cold on Canadian hills, or Minden's plain,
> Perhaps that mother wept her soldier slain;
> Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolved in dew,
> The big drops mingling with the milk he drew
> Gave the sad presage of his future years,
> The child of misery baptised in tears.'

48. "Burns seemed much affected by the print, or rather by the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He actually shed tears. He asked whose the lines were; and it chanced that nobody but myself remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten poem of Langhorne's called by the unpromising title of 'The Justice of Peace.' I whispered my information to a friend present; he mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though of mere civility, I then received and still recollect with very great pleasure.

49. "His person was strong and robust; his manners rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect perhaps from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture: but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished, as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I should have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scotch school, *i. e.* none of your modern agriculturists who keep labourers for their drudgery, but the *douce gudeman* who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast, which glowed (I say

literally *glowed*) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence, without the slightest presumption. Among the men who were the most learned of their time and country, he expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without the least intrusive forwardness: and when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet at the same time with modesty. I do not remember any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be quoted; nor did I ever see him again, except in the street, where he did not recognise me, as I could not expect he should. He was much caressed in Edinburgh: but (considering what literary emoluments have been since his day) the efforts made for his relief were extremely trifling.

50. "I remember, on this occasion I mention, I thought Burns's acquaintance with English poetry was rather limited; and also that, having twenty times the abilities of Allan Ramsay and of Ferguson, he talked of them with too much humility as his models: there was doubtless national predilection in his estimate.

51. "This is all I can tell you about Burns. I have only to add, that his dress corresponded with his manner. He was like a farmer dressed in his best to dine with the laird. I do not speak *in malam partem*, when I say, I never saw a man in company with his superiors in station or information more perfectly free from either the reality or the affectation of embarrassment. I was told, but did not observe it, that his address to females was extremely deferential, and always with a turn either to the pathetic or humorous, which engaged their attention particularly. I have heard the late Duchess of Gordon remark this.—I do not know anything I can add to these recollections of forty years since."

52. The conduct of Burns under this dazzling blaze of favour; the calm, unaffected, manly manner in which he not only bore it, but estimated its value, has justly been regarded as the best proof that could be given of his real vigour and integrity of mind. A little natural vanity, some touches of hypocritical modesty, some glimmerings of af-

fectation, at least some fear of being thought affected, we could have pardoned in almost any man; but no such indication is to be traced here. In his unexampled situation the young peasant is not a moment perplexed; so many strange lights do not confuse him, do not lead him astray. Nevertheless, we cannot but perceive that this winter did him great and lasting injury. A somewhat clearer knowledge of men's affairs, scarcely of their characters, it did afford him; but a sharper feeling of Fortune's unequal arrangements in their social destiny it also left with him. He had seen the gay and gorgeous arena, in which the powerful are born to play their parts; nay had himself stood in the midst of it; and he felt more bitterly than ever, that here he was but a looker-on, and had no part or lot in that splendid game. From this time a jealous indignant fear of social degradation takes possession of him; and perverts, so far as aught could pervert, his private contentment, and his feelings towards his richer fellows. It was clear to Burns that he had talent enough to make a fortune, or a hundred fortunes, could he but have rightly willed this; it was clear also that he willed something far different, and therefore could not make one. Unhappy it was that he had not power to choose the one, and reject the other; but must halt forever between two opinions, two objects; making hampered advancement towards either. But so it is with many men: we "long for the merchandise, yet would fain keep the price;" and so stand chaffering with Fate, in vexatious altercation, till the night come, and our fair is over!

53. The Edinburgh Learned of that period were in general more noted for clearness of head than for warmth of heart: with the exception of the good old Blacklock, whose help was too ineffectual, scarcely one among them seems to have looked at Burns with any true sympathy, or indeed much otherwise than as at a highly curious *thing*.

By the great also he is treated in the customary fashion; entertained at their tables and dismissed: certain modica of pudding and praise are, from time to time, gladly exchanged for the fascination of his presence; which exchange once effected, the bargain is finished, and each party goes his several way. At the end of this strange season, Burns gloomily sums up his gains and losses, and meditates on the chaotic future. In money he is somewhat richer; in fame and the show of happiness, infinitely richer; but in the substance of it, as poor as ever. Nay poorer; for his heart is now maddened still more with the fever of worldly Ambition; and through long years the disease will rack him with unprofitable sufferings, and weaken his strength for all true and nobler aims.

54. What Burns was next to do or to avoid; how a man so circumstanced was now to guide himself towards his true advantage, might at this point of time have been a question for the wisest. It was a question too, which apparently he was left altogether to answer for himself: of his learned or rich patrons it had not struck any individual to turn a thought on this so trivial matter. Without claiming for Burns the praise of perfect sagacity, we must say, that his Excise and Farm scheme does not seem to us a very unreasonable one; that we should be at a loss, even now, to suggest one decidedly better. Certain of his admirers have felt scandalised at his ever resolving to *gauge;* and would have had him lie at the pool, till the spirit of Patronage stirred the waters, that so, with one friendly plunge, all his sorrows might be healed. Unwise counsellors! They know not the manner of this spirit; and how, in the lap of most golden dreams, a man might have happiness, were it not that in the interim he must die of hunger! It reflects credit on the manliness and sound sense of Burns, that he felt so early on what ground he was standing; and preferred self-help, on the humblest scale, to dependence

and inaction, though with hope of far more splendid possibilities. But even these possibilities were not rejected in his scheme: he might expect, if it chanced that he *had* any friend, to rise, in no long period, into something even like opulence and leisure; while again, if it chanced that he had no friend, he could still live in security; and for the rest, he "did not intend to borrow honour from any profession." We reckon that his plan was honest and well-calculated: all turned on the execution of it. Doubtless it failed; yet not, we believe, from any vice inherent in itself. Nay, after all, it was no failure of external means, but of internal, that overtook Burns. His was no bankruptcy of the purse, but of the soul; to his last day, he owed no man anything.

55. Meanwhile he begins well: with two good and wise actions. His donation to his mother, munificent from a man whose income had lately been seven pounds a-year, was worthy of him, and not more than worthy. Generous also, and worthy of him, was the treatment of the woman whose life's welfare now depended on his pleasure. A friendly observer might have hoped serene days for him: his mind is on the true road to peace with itself: what clearness he still wants will be given as he proceeds; for the best teacher of duties, that still lie dim to us, is the Practice of those we see and have at hand. Had the "patrons of genius," who could give him nothing, but taken nothing from him, at least nothing more! The wounds of his heart would have healed, vulgar ambition would have died away. Toil and Frugality would have been welcome, since Virtue dwelt with them; and Poetry would have shone through them as of old: and in her clear ethereal light, which was his own by birthright, he might have looked down on his earthly destiny, and all its obstructions, not with patience only, but with love.

56. But the patrons of genius would not have it so.

Picturesque tourists,[3] all manner of fashionable danglers after literature, and, far worse, all manner of convivial Mæcenases, hovered round him in his retreat; and his good as well as his weak qualities secured them influence over him. He was flattered by their notice; and his warm social nature made it impossible for him to shake them off, and hold on his way apart from them. These men, as we believe, were proximately the means of his ruin. Not that they meant him any ill; they only meant themselves a little good; if he suffered harm, let *him* look to it! But they wasted his precious time and his precious talent; they disturbed his composure, broke down his returning habits of temperance and assiduous contented exertion. Their pampering was baneful to him; their cruelty, which soon followed, was equally baneful. The old grudge against Fortune's inequality awoke with new bitterness in their neighbourhood; and Burns had no retreat but to "the Rock of Independence," which is but an air-castle after all, that looks well at a distance, but will screen no one from real wind and wet. Flushed with irregular excitement, exasperated alternately by contempt of others, and

[3] There is one little sketch by certain "English gentlemen" of this class, which, though adopted in Currie's Narrative, and since then repeated in most others, we have all along felt an invincible disposition to regard as imaginary: "On a rock that projected into the stream, they saw a man employed in angling, of a singular appearance. He had a cap made of fox-skin on his head, a loose greatcoat fixed round him by a belt, from which depended an enormous Highland broad-sword. It was Burns." Now, we rather think, it was *not* Burns. For, to say nothing of the fox-skin cap, the loose and quite Hibernian watchcoat with the belt, what are we to make of this "enormous Highland broad-sword" depending from him? More especially, as there is no word of parish constables on the outlook to see whether, as Dennis phrases it, he had an eye to his own midriff or that of the public! Burns, of all men, had the least need, and the least tendency, to seek for distinction, either in his own eyes, or those of others, by such poor mummeries.—*Carlyle's note.*

contempt of himself, Burns was no longer regaining his peace of mind, but fast losing it forever. There was a hollowness at the heart of his life, for his conscience did not now approve what he was doing.

57. Amid the vapours of unwise enjoyment, of bootless remorse, and angry discontent with Fate, his true loadstar, a life of Poetry, with Poverty, nay with Famine if it must be so, was too often altogether hidden from his eyes. And yet he sailed a sea, where without some such loadstar there was no right steering. Meteors of French Politics rise before him, but these were not *his* stars. An accident this, which hastened, but did not originate, his worst distresses. In the mad contentions of that time, he comes in collision with certain official Superiors; is wounded by them; cruelly lacerated, we should say, could a dead mechanical implement, in any case, be called cruel: and shrinks, in indignant pain, into deeper self-seclusion, into gloomier moodiness than ever. His life has now lost its unity: it is a life of fragments; led with little aim, beyond the melancholy one of securing its own continuance,—in fits of wild false joy when such offered, and of black despondency when they passed away. His character before the world begins to suffer: calumny is busy with him; for a miserable man makes more enemies than friends. Some faults he has fallen into, and a thousand misfortunes; but deep criminality is what he stands accused of, and they that are *not* without sin cast the first stone at him! For is he not a well-wisher to the French Revolution, a Jacobin, and therefore in that one act guilty of all? These accusations, political and moral, it has since appeared, were false enough: but the world hesitated little to credit them. Nay his convivial Mæcenases themselves were not the last to do it. There is reason to believe that, in his later years, the Dumfries Aristocracy had partly withdrawn themselves from Burns, as from a tainted per-

son, no longer worthy of their acquaintance. That painful class, stationed, in all provincial cities, behind the outmost breastwork of Gentility, there to stand siege and do battle against the intrusions of Grocerdom and Grazierdom, had actually seen dishonour in the society of Burns, and branded him with their veto; had, as we vulgarly say, *cut* him! We find one passage in this Work of Mr. Lockhart's, which will not out of our thoughts:

58. "A gentleman of that county, whose name I have already more than once had occasion to refer to, has often told me that he was seldom more grieved, than when riding into Dumfries one fine summer evening about this time to attend a county ball, he saw Burns walking alone, on the shady side of the principal street of the town, while the opposite side was gay with successive groups of gentlemen and ladies, all drawn together for the festivities of the night, not one of whom appeared willing to recognise him. The horseman dismounted, and joined Burns, who on his proposing to cross the street said: 'Nay, nay, my young friend, that's all over now;' and quoted, after a pause, some verses of Lady Grizzel Baillie's pathetic ballad:

> 'His bonnet stood ance fu' fair on his brow,
> His auld ane look'd better than mony ane's new;
> But now he lets 't wear ony way it will hing,
> And casts himsell dowie upon the corn-bing.
>
> O, were we young as we ance hae been,
> We sud hae been gallopping down on yon green,
> And linking it ower the lily-white lea!
> *And werena my heart light, I wad die.*'

It was little in Burns's character to let his feelings on certain subjects escape in this fashion. He, immediately after reciting these verses, assumed the sprightliness of his most pleasing manner; and taking his young friend home with him, entertained him very agreeably till the hour of the ball arrived."

59. Alas! when we think that Burns now sleeps "where

bitter indignation can no longer lacerate his heart,"[4] and that most of those fair dames and frizzled gentlemen already lie at his side, where the breastwork of gentility is quite thrown down,—who would not sigh over the thin delusions and foolish toys that divide heart from heart, and make man unmerciful to his brother!

60. It was not now to be hoped that the genius of Burns would ever reach maturity, or accomplish aught worthy of itself. His spirit was jarred in its melody; not the soft breath of natural feeling, but the rude hand of Fate, was now sweeping over the strings. And yet what harmony was in him, what music even in his discords! How the wild tones had a charm for the simplest and the wisest; and all men felt and knew that here also was one of the Gifted! "If he entered an inn at midnight, after all the inmates were in bed, the news of his arrival circulated from the cellar to the garret; and ere ten minutes had elapsed, the landlord and all his guests were assembled!" Some brief pure moments of poetic life were yet appointed him, in the composition of his Songs. We can understand how he grasped at this employment; and how too, he spurned all other reward for it but what the labour itself brought him. For the soul of Burns, though scathed and marred, was yet living in its full moral strength, though sharply conscious of its errors and abasement: and here, in his destitution and degradation, was one act of seeming nobleness and self-devotedness left even for him to perform. He felt too, that with all the "thoughtless follies" that had "laid him low," the world was unjust and cruel to him; and he silently appealed to another and calmer time. Not as a hired soldier, but as a patriot, would he strive for the glory of his country: so he cast from him the poor sixpence a-day, and served zealously as a volunteer. Let us

[4] *Ubi sæva indignatio cor ulterius lacerare nequit.* Swift's Epitaph. —*Carlyle's note.*

not grudge him this last luxury of his existence; let him not have appealed to us in vain! The money was not necessary to him; he struggled through without it: long since, these guineas would have been gone, and now the high-mindedness of refusing them will plead for him in all hearts forever.

61. We are here arrived at the crisis of Burns's life; for matters had now taken such a shape with him as could not long continue. If improvement was not to be looked for, Nature could only for a limited time maintain this dark and maddening warfare against the world and itself. We are not medically informed whether any continuance of years was, at this period, probable for Burns; whether his death is to be looked on as in some sense an accidental event, or only as the natural consequence of the long series of events that had preceded. The latter seems to be the likelier opinion; and yet it is by no means a certain one. At all events, as we have said, *some* change could not be very distant. Three gates of deliverance, it seems to us, were open for Burns: clear poetical activity; madness; or death. The first, with longer life, was still possible, though not probable; for physical causes were beginning to be concerned in it: and yet Burns had an iron resolution; could he but have seen and felt, that not only his highest glory, but his first duty, and the true medicine for all his woes, lay here. The second was still less probable; for his mind was ever among the clearest and firmest. So the milder third gate was opened for him: and he passed, not softly yet speedily, into that still country, where the hail-storms and fire-showers do not reach, and the heaviest-laden wayfarer at length lays down his load!

VI. 62. Contemplating this sad end of Burns, and how he sank unaided by any real help, uncheered by any wise sympathy, generous minds have sometimes figured to themselves, with a reproachful sorrow, that much might have

been done for him; that by counsel, true affection and friendly ministrations, he might have been saved to himself and the world. We question whether there is not more tenderness of heart than soundness of judgment in these suggestions. It seems dubious to us whether the richest, wisest, most benevolent individual could have lent Burns any effectual help. Counsel, which seldom profits any one, he did not need; in his understanding, he knew the right from the wrong, as well perhaps as any man ever did; but the persuasion, which would have availed him, lies not so much in the head as in the heart, where no argument or expostulation could have assisted much to implant it. As to money again, we do not believe that this was his essential want; or well see how any private man could, even presupposing Burns's consent, have bestowed on him an independent fortune, with much prospect of decisive advantage. It is a mortifying truth, that two men in any rank of society, could hardly be found virtuous enough to give money, and to take it as a necessary gift, without injury to the moral entireness of one or both. But so stands the fact: Friendship, in the old heroic sense of that term, no longer exists; except in the cases of kindred or other legal affinity, it is in reality no longer expected, or recognised as a virtue among men. A close observer of manners has pronounced "Patronage," that is, pecuniary or other economic furtherance, to be "twice cursed;" cursing him that gives, and him that takes! And thus, in regard to outward matters also, it has become the rule, as in regard to inward it always was and must be the rule, that no one shall look for effectual help to another; but that each shall rest contented with what help he can afford himself. Such, we say, is the principle of modern Honour; naturally enough growing out of that sentiment of Pride, which we inculcate and encourage as the basis of our whole social morality. Many a poet has been poorer

than Burns; but no one was ever prouder: we may question whether, without great precautions, even a pension from Royalty would not have galled and encumbered, more than actually assisted him.

63. Still less, therefore, are we disposed to join with another class of Burns's admirers, who accuse the higher ranks among us of having ruined Burns by their selfish neglect of him. We have already stated our doubts whether direct pecuniary help, had it been offered, would have been accepted, or could have proved very effectual. We shall readily admit, however, that much was to be done for Burns; that many a poisoned arrow might have been warded from his bosom; many an entanglement in his path cut asunder by the hand of the powerful; and light and heat, shed on him from high places, would have made his humble atmosphere more genial; and the softest heart then breathing might have lived and died with some fewer pangs. Nay, we shall grant farther, and for Burns it is granting much, that, with all his pride, he would have thanked, even with exaggerated gratitude, any one who had cordially befriended him: patronage, unless once cursed, needed not to have been twice so. At all events, the poor promotion he desired in his calling might have been granted: it was his own scheme, therefore likelier than any other to be of service. All this it might have been a luxury, nay it was a duty, for our nobility to have done. No part of all this, however, did any of them do; or apparently attempt, or wish to do: so much is granted against them. But what then is the amount of their blame? Simply that they were men of the world, and walked by the principles of such men; that they treated Burns, as other nobles and other commoners had done other poets; as the English did Shakspeare; as King Charles and his Cavaliers did Butler, as King Philip and his Grandees did Cervantes. Do men gather grapes of thorns; or shall we cut down our thorns

for yielding only a *fence* and haws? How, indeed, could the "nobility and gentry of his native land" hold out any help to this "Scottish Bard, proud of his name and country"? Were the nobility and gentry so much as able rightly to help themselves? Had they not their game to preserve; their borough interests to strengthen; dinners, therefore, of various kinds to eat and give? Were their means more than adequate to all this business, or less than adequate? Less than adequate, in general; few of them in reality were richer than Burns; many of them were poorer; for sometimes they had to wring their supplies, as with thumbscrews, from the hard hand; and, in their need of guineas, to forget their duty of mercy; which Burns was never reduced to do. Let us pity and forgive them. The game they preserved and shot, the dinners they ate and gave, the borough interests they strengthened, the *little* Babylons they severally builded by the glory of their might, are all melted or melting back into the primeval Chaos, as man's merely selfish endeavours are fated to do: and here was an action, extending, in virtue of its worldly influence, we may say, through all time; in virtue of its moral nature, beyond all time, being immortal as the Spirit of Goodness itself; this action was offered them to do, and light was not given them to do it. Let us pity and forgive them. But better than pity, let us go and *do otherwise*. Human suffering did not end with the life of Burns; neither was the solemn mandate, "Love one another, bear one another's burdens," given to the rich only, but to all men. True, we shall find no Burns to relieve, to assuage by our aid or our pity; but celestial natures, groaning under the fardels of a weary life, we shall still find; and that wretchedness which Fate has rendered *voiceless* and *tuneless* is not the least wretched, but the most.

64. Still, we do not think that the blame of Burns's fail-

ure lies chiefly with the world. The world, it seems to us, treated him with more rather than with less kindness than it usually shows to such men. It has ever, we fear, shown but small favour to its Teachers: hunger and nakedness, perils and revilings, the prison, the cross, the poison-chalice have, in most times and countries, been the market-price it has offered for Wisdom, the welcome with which it has greeted those who have come to enlighten and purify it. Homer and Socrates, and the Christian Apostles, belong to old days; but the world's Martyrology was not completed with these. Roger Bacon and Galileo languish in priestly dungeons; Tasso pines in the cell of a madhouse; Camoens dies begging on the streets of Lisbon. So neglected, so "persecuted they the Prophets," not in Judea only, but in all places where men have been. We reckon that every poet of Burns's order is, or should be, a prophet and teacher to his age; that he has no right to expect great kindness from it, but rather is bound to do it great kindness; that Burns, in particular, experienced fully the usual proportion of the world's goodness; and that the blame of his failure, as we have said, lies not chiefly with the world.

65. Where, then, does it lie? We are forced to answer: With himself; it is his inward, not his outward misfortunes that bring him to the dust. Seldom, indeed, is it otherwise; seldom is a life morally wrecked but the grand cause lies in some internal mal-arrangement, some want less of good fortune than of good guidance. Nature fashions no creature without implanting in it the strength needful for its action and duration; least of all does she so neglect her masterpiece and darling, the poetic soul. Neither can we believe that it is in the power of *any* external circumstances utterly to ruin the mind of a man; nay if proper wisdom be given him, even so much as to affect its essential health and beauty. The sternest sum-

total of all worldly misfortunes is Death; nothing more *can* lie in the cup of human woe: yet many men, in all ages, have triumphed over Death, and led it captive; converting its physical victory into a moral victory for themselves, into a seal and immortal consecration for all that their past life had achieved. What has been done, may be done again: nay, it is but the degree and not the kind of such heroism that differs in different seasons: for without some portion of this spirit, not of boisterous daring, but of silent fearlessness, of Self-denial in all its forms, no good man, in any scene or time, has ever attained to be good.

66. We have already stated the error of Burns; and mourned over it, rather than blamed it. It was the want of unity in his purposes, of consistency in his aims; the hapless attempt to mingle in friendly union the common spirit of the world with the spirit of poetry, which is of a far different and altogether irreconcilable nature. Burns was nothing wholly, and Burns could be nothing, no man formed as he was can be anything, by halves. The heart, not of a mere hot-blooded, popular Versemonger, or poetical *Restaurateur*, but of a true Poet and Singer, worthy of the old religious heroic times, had been given him: and he fell in an age, not of heroism and religion, but of scepticism, selfishness and triviality, when true Nobleness was little understood, and its place supplied by a hollow, dissocial, altogether barren and unfruitful principle of Pride. The influences of that age,[2] his open, kind, susceptible nature,[3] to say nothing of his highly untoward situation, made it more than usually difficult for him to cast aside, or rightly subordinate; the better spirit that was within him ever sternly demanded its rights, its supremacy: he spent his life in endeavouring to reconcile these two; and lost it, as he must lose it, without reconciling them.

67. Burns was born poor; and born also to continue poor, for he would not endeavour to be otherwise: this

it had been well could he have once for all admitted, and considered as finally settled. He was poor, truly; but hundreds even of his own class and order of minds have been poorer, yet have suffered nothing deadly from it: nay, his own Father had a far sorer battle with ungrateful destiny than his was ; and he did not yield to it, but died courageously warring, and to all moral intents prevailing, against it. True, Burns had little means, had even little time for poetry, his only real pursuit and vocation; but so much the more precious was what little he had. In all these external respects his case was hard; but very far from the hardest. Poverty, incessant drudgery and much worse evils, it has often been the lot of Poets and wise men to strive with, and their glory to conquer. Locke was banished as a traitor; and wrote his "Essay on the Human Understanding" sheltering himself in a Dutch garret. Was Milton rich or at his ease when he composed "Paradise Lost"? Not only low, but fallen from a height; not only poor, but impoverished; in darkness and with dangers compassed round, he sang his immortal song, and found fit audience, though few. Did not Cervantes finish his work, a maimed soldier and in prison? Nay, was not the "Araucana," which Spain acknowledges as its Epic, written without even the aid of paper; on scraps of leather, as the stout fighter and voyager snatched any moment from that wild warfare?

68. And what, then, had these men, which Burns wanted? Two things; both which, it seems to us, are indispensable for such men. They had a true, religious principle of morals; and a single, not a double aim in their activity. They were not self-seekers and self-worshippers; but seekers and worshippers of something far better than Self. Not personal enjoyment was their object; but a high, heroic idea of Religion, of Patriotism, of heavenly Wisdom, in one or the other form, ever hovered

before them; in which cause they neither shrank from suffering, nor called on the earth to witness it as something wonderful; but patiently endured, counting it blessedness enough so to spend and be spent. Thus the "golden-calf of Self-love," however curiously carved, was not their Deity; but the invisible Goodness, which alone is man's reasonable service. This feeling was as a celestial fountain, whose streams refreshed into gladness and beauty all the provinces of their otherwise too desolate existence. In a word, they willed one thing, to which all other things were subordinated and made subservient; and therefore they accomplished it. The wedge will rend rocks; but its edge must be sharp and single: if it be double, the wedge is bruised in pieces and will rend nothing.

69. Part of this superiority these men owed to their age; in which heroism and devotedness were still practised, or at least not yet disbelieved in: but much of it likewise they owed to themselves. With Burns, again, it was different. His morality, in most of its practical points, is that of a mere worldly man; enjoyment, in a finer or coarser shape, is the only thing he longs and strives for. A noble instinct sometimes raises him above this; but an instinct only, and acting only for moments. He has no Religion; in the shallow age, where his days were cast, Religion was not discriminated from the New and Old Light *forms* of Religion; and was, with these, becoming obsolete in the minds of men. His heart, indeed, is alive with a trembling adoration, but there is no temple in his understanding. He lives in darkness and in the shadow of doubt. His religion, at best, is an anxious wish; like that of Rabelais, "a great Perhaps."

70. He loved Poetry warmly, and in his heart; could he but have loved it purely, and with his whole undivided heart, it had been well. For Poetry, as Burns could have

followed it, is but another form of Wisdom, of Religion; is itself Wisdom and Religion. But this also was denied him. His poetry is a stray vagrant gleam, which will not be extinguished within him, yet rises not to be the true light of his path, but is often a wildfire that misleads him. It was not necessary for Burns to be rich, to be, or to seem, "independent;" but it *was* necessary for him to be at one with his own heart; to place what was highest in his nature highest also in his life; "to seek within himself for that consistency and sequence, which external events would forever refuse him." He was born a poet; poetry was the celestial element of his being, and should have been the soul of his whole endeavours. Lifted into that serene ether, whither he had wings given him to mount, he would have needed no other elevation: poverty, neglect and all evil, save the desecration of himself and his Art, were a small matter to him; the pride and the passions of the world lay far beneath his feet; and he looked down alike on noble and slave, on prince and beggar, and all that wore the stamp of man, with clear recognition, with brotherly affection, with sympathy, with pity. Nay, we question whether for his culture as a Poet poverty and much suffering for a season were not absolutely advantageous. Great men, in looking back over their lives, have testified to that effect. "I would not for much," says Jean Paul, "that I had been born richer." And yet Paul's birth was poor enough; for, in another place, he adds: "The prisoner's allowance is bread and water; and I had often only the latter." But the gold that is refined in the hottest furnace comes out the purest; or, as he has himself expressed it, "the canary-bird sings sweeter the longer it has been trained in a darkened cage."

VI. A man like Burns might have divided his hours between poetry and virtuous industry; industry which all true feeling sanctions, nay prescribes, and which has a

beauty, for that cause, beyond the pomp of thrones: but to divide his hours between poetry and rich men's banquets was an ill-starred and inauspicious attempt. How could he be at ease at such banquets? What had he to do there, mingling his music with the coarse roar of altogether earthly voices; brightening the thick smoke of intoxication with fire lent him from heaven? Was it his aim to *enjoy* life? Tomorrow he must go drudge as an Exciseman! We wonder not that Burns became moody, indignant, and at times an offender against certain rules of society; but rather that he did not grow utterly frantic, and run *amuck* against them all. How could a man, so falsely placed, by his own or others' fault, ever know contentment or peaceable diligence for an hour? What he did, under such perverse guidance, and what he forbore to do, alike fill us with astonishment at the natural strength and worth of his character.

272. Doubtless there was a remedy for this perverseness; but not in others; only in himself; least of all in simple increase of wealth and worldly "respectability." We hope we have now heard enough about the efficacy of wealth for poetry, and to make poets happy. Nay have we not seen another instance of it in these very days? Byron, a man of an endowment considerably less ethereal than that of Burns, is born in the rank not of a Scottish ploughman, but of an English peer: the highest worldly honours, the fairest worldly career, are his by inheritance; the richest harvest of fame he soon reaps, in another province, by his own hand. And what does all this avail him? Is he happy, is he good, is he true? Alas, he has a poet's soul, and strives towards the Infinite and the Eternal; and soon feels that all this is but mounting to the house-top to reach the stars! Like Burns, he is only a proud man; might, like him, have "purchased a pocket-copy of Milton to study the character of Satan;" for Satan also is Byron's

grand exemplar, the hero of his poetry, and the model apparently of his conduct. As in Burns's case too, the celestial element will not mingle with the clay of earth; both poet and man of the world he must not be; vulgar Ambition will not live kindly with poetic Adoration; he *cannot* serve God and Mammon. Byron, like Burns, is not happy; nay he is the most wretched of all men. His life is falsely arranged: the fire that is in him is not a strong, still, central fire, warming into beauty the products of a world; but it is the mad fire of a volcano; and now—we look sadly into the ashes of the crater, which ere long will fill itself with snow!

73. Byron and Burns were sent forth as missionaries to their generation, to teach it a higher Doctrine, a purer Truth; they had a message to deliver, which left them no rest till it was accomplished; in dim throes of pain, this divine behest lay smouldering within them; for they knew not what it meant, and felt it only in mysterious anticipation, and they had to die without articulately uttering it. They are in the camp of the Unconverted; yet not as high messengers of rigorous though benignant truth, but as soft flattering singers, and in pleasant fellowship will they live there: they are first adulated, then persecuted; they accomplish little for others; they find no peace for themselves, but only death and the peace of the grave. We confess, it is not without a certain mournful awe that we view the fate of these noble souls, so richly gifted, yet ruined to so little purpose with all their gifts. It seems to us there is a stern moral taught in this piece of history,—*twice* told us in our own time! Surely to men of like genius, if there be any such, it carries with it a lesson of deep impressive significance. Surely it would become such a man, furnished for the highest of all enterprises, that of being the Poet of his Age, to consider well what it is that he attempts, and in what spirit he attempts it. For the

words of Milton are true in all times, and were never truer than in this: "He who would write heroic poems must make his whole life a heroic poem." If he cannot first so make his life, then let him hasten from this arena; for neither its lofty glories, nor its fearful perils, are fit for him. Let him dwindle into a modish balladmonger; let him worship and besing the idols of the time, and the time will not fail to reward him. If, indeed, he can endure to live in that capacity! Byron and Burns could not live as idol-priests, but the fire of their own hearts consumed them; and better it was for them that they could not. For it is not in the favour of the great or of the small, but in a life of truth, and in the inexpugnable citadel of his own soul, that a Byron's or a Burns's strength must lie. Let the great stand aloof from him, or know how to reverence him. Beautiful is the union of wealth with favour and furtherance for literature; like the costliest flower-jar enclosing the loveliest amaranth. Yet let not the relation be mistaken. A true poet is not one whom they can hire by money or flattery to be a minister of their pleasures, their writer of occasional verses, their purveyor of table-wit; he cannot be their menial, he cannot even be their partisan. At the peril of both parties, let no such union be attempted! Will a Courser of the Sun work softly in the harness of a Dray-horse? His hoofs are of fire, and his path is through the heavens, bringing light to all lands; will he lumber on mud highways, dragging ale for earthly appetites from door to door?

74. But we must stop short in these considerations, which would lead us to boundless lengths. We had something to say on the public moral character of Burns; but this also we must forbear. We are far from regarding him as guilty before the world, as guiltier than the average; nay from doubting that he is less guilty than one of ten

thousand. Tried at a tribunal far more rigid than that where the *Plebiscita* of common civic reputations are pronounced, he has seemed to us even there less worthy of blame than of pity and wonder. But the world is habitually unjust in its judgments of such men; unjust on many grounds, of which this one may be stated as the substance: It decides, like a court of law, by dead statutes; and not positively but negatively, less on what is done right, than on what is or is not done wrong. Not the few inches of deflection from the mathematical orbit, which are so easily measured, but the *ratio* of these to the whole diameter, constitutes the real aberration. This orbit may be a planet's, its diameter the breadth of the solar system; or it may be a city hippodrome; nay the circle of a ginhorse, its diameter a score of feet or paces. But the inches of deflection only are measured: and it is assumed that the diameter of the ginhorse, and that of the planet, will yield the same ratio when compared with them! Here lies the root of many a blind, cruel condemnation of Burnses, Swifts, Rousseaus, which one never listens to with approval. Granted, the ship comes into harbour with shrouds and tackle damaged; the pilot is blameworthy; he has not been all-wise and all-powerful: but to know *how* blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe, or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs.

75. With our readers in general, with men of right feeling anywhere, we are not required to plead for Burns. In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts, in a far nobler mausoleum than that one of marble; neither will his Works, even as they are, pass away from the memory of men. While the Shakspeares and Miltons roll on like mighty rivers through the country of Thought, bearing fleets of traffickers and assiduous pearl-fishers on their waves; this little Valclusa Fountain will also arrest our

eye: for this also is of Nature's own and most cunning workmanship, bursts from the depths of the earth, with a full gushing current, into the light of day; and often will the traveller turn aside to drink of its clear waters, and muse among its rocks and pines !

THE HERO AS MAN OF LETTERS—ROBERT BURNS

From "Heroes and Hero Worship."

It was a curious phenomenon, in the withered, unbelieving, secondhand Eighteenth Century, that of a Hero starting up, among the artificial pasteboard figures and productions, in the guise of a Robert Burns. Like a little well in the rocky desert places,—like a sudden splendour of Heaven in the artificial Vauxhall! People knew not what to make of it. They took it for a piece of the Vauxhall fire-work; alas, it *let* itself be so taken, though struggling half-blindly, as in bitterness of death, against that! Perhaps no man had such a false reception from his fellow-men. Once more a very wasteful life-drama was enacted under the sun.

The tragedy of Burns's life is known to all of you. Surely we may say, if discrepancy between place held and place merited constitute perverseness of lot for a man, no lot could be more perverse than Burns's. Among those secondhand acting-figures, *mimes* for most part, of the Eighteenth Century, once more a giant Original Man; one of those men who reach down to the perennial Deeps, who take rank with the Heroic among men: and he was born in a poor Ayrshire hut. The largest soul of all the British lands came among us in the shape of a hard-handed Scottish Peasant.

His Father, a poor toiling man, tried various things; did not succeed in any; was involved in continual difficulties.

The Steward, Factor as the Scotch call him, used to send letters and threatenings, Burns says, "which threw us all into tears." The brave, hard-toiling, hard-suffering Father, his brave heroine of a wife; and those children, of whom Robert was one! In this Earth, so wide otherwise, no shelter for *them*. The letters "threw us all into tears": figure it. The brave Father, I say always;—a *silent* Hero and Poet; without whom the son had never been a speaking one! Burns's Schoolmaster came afterwards to London, learnt what good society was; but declares that in no meeting of men did he ever enjoy better discourse than at the hearth of this peasant. And his poor "seven acres of nursery-ground,"—not that, nor the miserable patch of clay-farm, nor anything he tried to get a living by, would prosper with him; he had a sore unequal battle all his days. But he stood to it valiantly; a wise, faithful, unconquerable man;—swallowing-down how many sore sufferings daily into silence; fighting like an unseen Hero,—nobody publishing newspaper paragraphs about his nobleness; voting pieces of plate to him! However, he was not lost: nothing is lost. Robert is there; the outcome of him,—and indeed of many generations of such as him.

This Burns appeared under every disadvantage: uninstructed, poor, born only to hard manual toil; and writing, when it came to that, in a rustic special dialect, known only to a small province of the country he lived in. Had he written, even what he did write, in the general language of England, I doubt not he had already become universally recognised as being, or capable to be, one of our greatest men. That he should have tempted so many to penetrate through the rough husk of that dialect of his, is proof that there lay something far from common within it. He has gained a certain recognition, and is continuing to do so over all quarters of our wide Saxon world: wheresoever a Saxon dialect is spoken, it begins to be understood, by

personal inspection of this and the other, that one of the most considerable Saxon men of the Eighteenth century was an Ayrshire Peasant named Robert Burns. Yes, I will say, here too was a piece of the right Saxon stuff: strong as the Harz-rock, rooted in the depths of the world;—rock, yet with wells of living softness in it! A wild impetuous whirlwind of passion and faculty slumbered quiet there; such heavenly *melody* dwelling in the heart of it. A noble rough genuineness; homely, rustic, honest; true simplicity of strength; with its lightning-fire, with its soft dewy pity;—like the old Norse Thor, the Peasant-god!—

Burns's Brother Gilbert, a man of much sense and worth, has told me that Robert, in his young days, in spite of their hardship, was usually the gayest of speech; a fellow of infinite frolic, laughter, sense and heart; far pleasanter to hear there, stript cutting peats in the bog, or suchlike, than he ever afterwards knew him. I can well believe it. This basis of mirth (*"fond gaillard,"* as old Marquis Mirabeau calls it), a primal-element of sunshine and joyfulness, coupled with his other deep and earnest qualities, is one of the most attractive characteristics of Burns. A large fund of Hope dwells in him; spite of his tragical history, he is not a mourning man. He shakes his sorrows gallantly aside; bounds forth victorious over them. It is as the lion shaking "dew-drops from his mane;" as the swift-bounding horse, that *laughs* at the shaking of the spear.—But indeed, Hope, Mirth, of the sort like Burns's, are they not the outcome properly of warm generous affection,—such as is the beginning of all to every man?

You would think it strange if I called Burns the most gifted British soul we had in all that century of his: and yet I believe the day is coming when there will be little danger in saying so. His writings, all that he *did* under such obstructions, are only a poor fragment of him. Pro-

fessor Stewart remarked very justly, what indeed is true of all Poets good for much, that his poetry was not any particular faculty; but the general result of a naturally vigorous original mind expressing itself in that way. Burns's gifts, expressed in conversation, are the theme of all that ever heard him. All kinds of gifts: from the gracefulest utterances of courtesy, to the highest fire of passionate speech; loud floods of mirth, soft wailings of affection, laconic emphasis, clear piercing insight; all was in him. Witty duchesses celebrate him as a man whose speech "led them off their feet." This is beautiful: but still more beautiful that which Mr. Lockhart has recorded, which I have more than once alluded to, How the waiters and ostlers at inns would get out of bed, and come crowding to hear this man speak! Waiters and ostlers:—they too were men, and here was a man! I have heard much about his speech; but one of the best things I ever heard of it was, last year, from a venerable gentleman long familiar with him. That it was speech distinguished by always *having something in it.* "He spoke rather little than much," this old man told me; "sat rather silent in those early days, as in the company of persons above him; and always when he did speak, it was to throw new light on the matter." I know not why any one should ever speak otherwise!—But if we look at his general force of soul, his healthy *robustness* everyway, the rugged downrightness, penetration, generous valour and manfulness that was in him,—where shall we readily find a better-gifted man?

Among the great men of the Eighteenth Century, I sometimes feel as if Burns might be found to resemble Mirabeau more than any other. They differ widely in vesture; yet look at them intrinsically. There is the same burly thick-necked strength of body as of soul;—built, in both cases, on what the old Marquis calls a *fond gaillard.*

By nature, by course of breeding, indeed by nation, Mirabeau has much more of bluster; a noisy, forward, unresting man. But the characteristic of Mirabeau too is veracity and sense, power of true *insight*, superiority of vision. The thing that he says is worth remembering. It is a flash of insight into some object or other: so do both these men speak. The same raging passions; capable too in both of manifesting themselves as the tenderest noble affections. Wit, wild laughter, energy, directness, sincerity: these were in both. The types of the two men are not dissimilar. Burns too could have governed, debated in National Assemblies; politicised, as few could. Alas, the courage which had to exhibit itself in capture of smuggling schooners in the Solway Frith; in keeping *silence* over so much, where no good speech, but only inarticulate rage was possible: this might have bellowed forth Ushers de Brézé and the like; and made itself visible to all men, in managing of kingdoms, in ruling of great ever-memorable epochs! But they said to him reprovingly, his Official Superiors said, and wrote: "You are to work, not think." Of your *thinking*-faculty, the greatest in this land, we have no need; you are to gauge beer there; for that only are *you* wanted. Very notable;—and worth mentioning, though we know what is to be said and answered! As if Thought, Power of Thinking, were not, at all times, in all places and situations of the world, precisely the thing that *was* wanted. The fatal man, is he not always the *un*thinking man, the man who cannot think and *see;* but only grope, and hallucinate, and *mis*see the nature of the thing he works with? He missees it, mis*takes* it as we say; takes it for one thing, and it *is* another thing,—and leaves him standing like a Futility there! He is the fatal man; unutterably fatal, put in the high places of men.—"Why complain of this?" say some: "Strength is mournfully denied its arena; that was true from of old." Doubtless;

and the worse for the *arena*, answer I! *Complaining* profits little; stating of the truth may profit. That a Europe, with its French Revolution just breaking out, finds no need of a Burns except for gauging beer,—is a thing I, for one, cannot *rejoice* at!—

Once more we have to say here, that the chief quality of Burns is the *sincerity* of him. So in his Poetry, so in his Life. The Song he sings is not of fantasticalities; it is of a thing felt, really there; the prime merit of this, as of all in him, and of his Life generally, is truth. The Life of Burns is what we may call a great tragic sincerity. A sort of savage sincerity,—not cruel, far from that; but wild, wrestling naked with the truth of things. In that sense, there is something of the savage in all great men.

Hero-worship,—Odin, Burns? Well; these Men of Letters too were not without a kind of Hero-worship: but what a strange condition has that got into now! The waiters and ostlers of Scotch inns, prying about the door, eager to catch any word that fell from Burns, were doing unconscious reverence to the Heroic. Johnson had his Boswell for worshipper. Rousseau had worshippers enough; princes calling on him in his mean garret; the great, the beautiful doing reverence to the poor moonstruck man. For himself a most portentous contradiction; the two ends of his life not to be brought into harmony. He sits at the tables of grandees; and has to copy music for his own living. He cannot even get his music copied. "By dint of dining out," says he, "I run the risk of dying by starvation at home." For his worshippers too a most questionable thing! If doing Hero-worship well or badly be the test of vital wellbeing or illbeing to a generation, can we say that *these* generations are very first-rate?—And yet our heroic Men of Letters do teach, govern, are kings, priests, or what you like to call them; intrinsically there is no preventing it by any means whatever. The world

has to obey him who thinks and sees in the world. The world can alter the manner of that; can either have it as blessed continuous summer sunshine, or as unblessed black thunder and tornado,—with unspeakable difference of profit for the world! The manner of it is very alterable; the matter and fact of it is not alterable by any power under the sky. Light; or, failing that, lightning: the world can take its choice. Not whether we call an Odin god, prophet, priest, or what we call him; but whether we believe the word he tells us: there it all lies. If it be a true word, we shall have to believe it; believing it, we shall have to do it. What *name* or welcome we give him or it, is a point that concerns ourselves mainly. *It*, the new Truth, new deeper revealing of the Secret of this Universe, is verily of the nature of a message from on high; and must and will have itself obeyed.—

My last remark is on that notablest phasis of Burns's history,—his visit to Edinburgh. Often it seems to me as if his demeanour there were the highest proof he gave of what a fund of worth and genuine manhood was in him. If we think of it, few heavier burdens could be laid on the strength of a man. So sudden; all common *Lionism*, which ruins innumerable men, was as nothing to this. It is as if Napoleon had been made a King of, not gradually, but at once from the Artillery Lieutenancy in the Regiment La Fère. Burns, still only in his twenty-seventh year, is no longer even a ploughman; he is flying to the West Indies to escape disgrace and a jail. This month he is a ruined peasant, his wages seven pounds a year, and these gone from him: next month he is in the blaze of rank and beauty, handing down jewelled Duchesses to dinner; the cynosure of all eyes! Adversity is sometimes hard upon a man; but for one man who can stand prosperity, there are a hundred that will stand adversity. I admire much the way in which Burns met all this. Perhaps

no man one could point out, was ever so sorely tried, and so little forgot himself. Tranquil, unastonished; not abashed, not inflated, neither awkwardness nor affectation: he feels that *he* there is the man Robert Burns; that the "rank is but the guinea-stamp;" that the celebrity is but the candle-light, which will show *what* man, not in the least make him a better or other man! Alas, it may readily, unless he look to it, make him a *worse* man; a wretched inflated wind-bag,—inflated till he *burst*, and become a *dead* lion; for whom, as some one has said, "there is no resurrection of the body;" worse than a living dog!—Burns is admirable here.

And yet, alas, as I have observed elsewhere, these Lion-hunters were the ruin and death of Burns. It was they that rendered it impossible for him to live! They gathered around him in his Farm; hindered his industry; no place was remote enough from them. He could not get his Lionism forgotten, honestly as he was disposed to do so. He falls into discontents, into miseries, faults; the world getting ever more desolate for him; health, character, peace of mind all gone;—solitary enough now. It is tragical to think of! These men came but to *see* him; it was out of no sympathy with him, nor no hatred to him. They came to get a little amusement: they got their amusement;—and the Hero's life went for it!

Richter says, in the Island of Sumatra there is a kind of "Light-chafers," large Fire-flies, which people stick upon spits, and illuminate the ways with at night. Persons of condition can thus travel with a pleasant radiance, which they much admire. Great honour to the Fire-flies! But—!—

SELECTED POEMS OF ROBERT BURNS

Three of Burns's most famous poems are given in full in the Explanatory Notes—*To a Mountain Daisy* on page 100, *To a Mouse* on page 102, and *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled* on page 109.

The following poems are arranged in chronological order.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY

Lament in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose;
Our Bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remead;
The last, sad cape-stane of his woes;
Poor Mailie's dead!

It's no the loss o' warl's gear,
That could sae bitter draw the tear,
Or mak our Bardie, dowie, wear
The mourning weed:
He's lost a friend and neebor dear,
In Mailie dead.

Thro' a' the toun she trotted by him;
A lang half-mile she could descry him;

Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi' speed:
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him,
Than Mailie dead.

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
An' could behave hersel' wi' mense;
I'll say't, she never brak a fence,
Thro' thievish greed.
Our Bardie, lanely, keeps the spence
Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the howe,
Her living image in her yowe
Comes bleating to him, owre the knowe,
For bits o' bread;
And down the briny pearls rowe
Than Mailie's dead.

She was nae get o' moorland tips,
Wi' tawted ket, an' hairy hips;
For her forbears were brought in ships,
Frae yont the Tweed:
A bonnier fleesh ne'er cross'd the clips
Than Mailie's dead.

Wa worth the man wha first did shape
That vile, wanchancie thing—a rape!
It maks guid fellows girn an' gape,
Wi' chokin dread;
An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape,
For Mailie dead.

O, a' ye Bards on bonnie Doon!
An' wha on Ayr your chanters tune!
Come, join the melancholious croon
O' Robin's reed!
His heart will never get aboon!
His Mailie's dead!

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.

"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor."
GRAY.

My loved, my honored, much-respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end;
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise.
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been:
Ah! though his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween!

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh:
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh,
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn cotter frae his labor goes,—
This night his weekly moil is at an end,—
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee things, toddlin', stacher through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise and glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinking bonnily,
His clean hearthstane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun':
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town;
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeigned, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet;
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle and her shears,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new—
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's and their mistress's command,
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey;
And mind their labors wi' an eydent hand,
And ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk or play:
"And oh! be sure to fear the Lord alway!

And mind your duty, duly, morn and night!
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright!"

But, hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
Wi' heart-struck anxious care inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild, worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;
A strappin' youth; he taks the mother's eye;
Blithe Jenny sees the visit's no ill-ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave;
Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

Oh, happy love! where love like this is found!
Oh, heartfelt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare:—
If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale.

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch, a villain, lost to love and truth,
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his prejur'd arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild!

But now the supper crowns their simple board,—
The healsome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood:
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell,
And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell,
How 't was a towmont auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride;
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And "Let us worship GOD!" he says with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps *Dundee's* wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive *Martyrs,* worthy of the name,

Or noble *Elgin* beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page—
How Abram was the friend of GOD on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme—
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed:
How HE, who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;
How His first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down, to HEAVEN'S ETERNAL KING,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days:
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,

Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in His book of life the inmates poor enrol.

Then homeward all take off their several way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That HE who stills the raven's clamorous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God;"
And certes, in fair Virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind:
What is a lordling's pomp?—a cumbrous load
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And oh! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.

O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide,
That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart,
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God, peculiarly Thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
Oh never, never, Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot bard,
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

A BARD'S EPITAPH

Is there a whim-inspirèd fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool,
Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song,
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
That weekly this arèa throng,
Oh, pass not by!

But, with a frater-feeling strong,
Here heave a sigh.

Is there a man whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career,
Wild as the wave;
Here pause—and, through the starting tear,
Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stained his name!

Reader, attend—whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control
Is wisdom's root.

TO A LOUSE

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET, AT CHURCH

Ha! whare ye gaun, ye crowlin ferlie!
Your impudence protects you sairly:
I canna say but ye strunt rarely,
Owre gauze and lace;
Tho' faith, I fear ye dine but sparely
On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin, blastit wonner,
Detested, shunn'd by saunt an' sinner,
How dare ye set your fit upon her,
Sae fine a lady!
Gae somewhere else, and seek your dinner
On some poor body.

Swith, in some beggar's haffet squattle,
Wi' ither kindred, jumping cattle;
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle
In shoals and nations;
Whare horn nor bane ne'er dare unsettle
Your thick plantations.

Now haud ye there, ye're out o' sight,
Below the fatt'rels, snug an' tight;
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right
Till ye've got on it,
The vera tapmost, tow'ring height
O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth! right bauld ye set your nose out,
As plump and gray as onie grozet;
O for some rank, mercurial rozet,
Or fell, red smeddum,
I'd gie you sic a hearty doze o't,
Wad dress your droddum!

I wad na been surpris'd to spy
You on an auld wife's flainen toy;
Or aiblins some bit duddie boy,
On's wyliecoat;
But Miss's fine Lunardi! fie,
How daur ye do't?

O, Jenny, dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abread!
Ye little ken what cursed speed
The blastie's makin!
Thae winks and finger-ends, I dread,
Are notice takin!

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
And foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
And ev'n devotion!

I LOVE MY JEAN

TUNE—*Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey*

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonny lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:

There's wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And monie a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I hear her sweet and fair;
I see her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:

There's not a bonny flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,

There's not a bonny bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

AULD LANG SYNE

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne?

CHORUS

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wandered monie a weary foot,
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl't i' the burn,
Frae morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roared,
Sin' auld lang syne.

And here's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie 's a hand o' thine;
And we'll tak a right guid willie-waught,
For auld lang syne.

And surely you'll be your pint-stoup,
And surely I'll be mine;
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

JOHN ANDERSON

TUNE—*John Anderson my Jo*

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonny brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And monie a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

TO MARY IN HEAVEN

Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love?
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past,
Thy image at our last embrace,—
Ah! little thought we 't was our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar
Twined am'rous round the raptured scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray—
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care;
Time but th' impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS

TUNE—*Faille na Miosg*

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birthplace of valor, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands forever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

BONNIE DOON

Ye flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'lt break my heart, thou bonnie bird,
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause love was true.

Thou'lt break my heart, thou bonnie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wistna o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae off its thorny tree,
And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

FLOW GENTLY, SWEET AFTON

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock-dove whose echo resounds through the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear,
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighboring hills,
Far marked with the courses of clear winding rills;
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow;
There oft as mild evening weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As gathering sweet flowerets she stems thy clear wave.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

HIGHLAND MARY

TUNE—*Katharine Ogie*

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' monie a vow, and locked embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder:
But, oh! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

Oh, pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kissed sae fondly,
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

A RED, RED ROSE

TUNE—*Graham's Strathspey*

Oh, my luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June;
Oh, my luve's like the melodie,
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonny lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun,
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that!
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that;
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that!

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that!

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that.

For a' that, and a' that,
His ribbon, star, and a' that;
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith, he maunna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that;
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may—
As come it will for a' that—
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,
That man to man, the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that!

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1 2. *Butler.* Samuel Butler (1612–1680), author of *Hudibras*, a witty, mock-epic poem, of which Carlyle was very fond, satirizing the Puritans. The poem attained great popularity, but the author was neglected, and died in poverty.

1 6. *Spinning-jenny.* A machine invented in 1767 that opened the way for great improvements in the manufacture of cotton. The inventor, James Hargreaves, did not reap "his reward in his own day." His patent was set aside, and he died a poor man.

1 13. *Prime of his manhood.* See Introduction, iv., or Chronological Table.

1 14. *Brave mausoleum.* In the churchyard at Dumfries. Notice the somewhat unusual sense in which *brave* is here used. As a matter of fact, the monument is covered with a tin dome, and Carlyle may have been punning when he speaks of the mausoleum as "shining" over his dust. There is certainly irony in his "brave."

1 21. *Lockhart.* John Gibson Lockhart (1794–1854) is best known from his famous biography of Sir Walter Scott, whose son-in-law he was.

2 1. *No man . . . is a hero to his valet.* An epigram commonly attributed to Madame de Sévigné, but its origin is doubtful.

2 10. *Sir Thomas Lucy's.* The legend is that Sir Thomas prosecuted Shakspere, then a young man, for "deer-stealing" on his estate, near Stratford. The poet is said to have revenged himself by composing an abusive ballad upon his prosecutor, and then to have fled to London to escape the consequences of his boldness. *John a Combe's.* John a Combe was a wealthy

neighbor of Shakspere's at Stratford, supposed also to have been an object of his satire. *A* is another spelling of *o'*, *of*.

2 14. *The wool-trade.* The woollen industry was then the largest in England, and a natural subject of conversation between country gentlemen.

2 17. *Bowels.* We now usually say "heart," but the expression was then a common one. See the concordance to the Bible, and the *Century Dictionary*.

2 20. *Caledonian Hunt.* An aristocratic organization of Scotch noblemen and gentlemen.

2 22. *Ayr Writers.* The word "writer" is applied in Scotland to lawyers and legal agents, as well as sometimes to their chief clerks. *New and Old Light Clergy.* The two parties into which the church in Scotland was divided. The "New Lights" were the more liberal and progressive, while the "Auld Lights" were more conservative, holding strict Calvinistic views. See Introduction, iv.

3 33. *Constable's Miscellany.* A series of original and of standard works reprinted in a cheap form, the earliest and most famous of the attempts to popularize wholesome literature.—*Encyclop. Brit.* The founder of the series was Archibald Constable, the famous Edinburgh publisher.

4 7. *Mr. Morris Birkbeck.* An English emigrant to the territory of Illinois, the author of two interesting series of letters—*Notes on a Journey in America from the Coast of Virginia to the Territory of Illinois* (1818), and *Letters from Illinois* (1818). Though Carlyle's tone is sarcastic, Birkbeck's impression of American kindness, courtesy, and simple good breeding is not, on the whole, exaggerated. The besetting vice of Americans, it is interesting to notice, he thought to be indolence.

5 17. "*Nine Days.*" The proverbial expression "nine days' wonder" has been in common use since the time of Chaucer.

5 27. *He had his very materials to discover.* Burns's poetry dealt with what was then new material—the life and emotions of the common people, expressed in their native dialect.

6 19. *Fergus[s]on or Ramsay.* Robert Fergusson (1751–1774), and Allan Ramsay (1686–1758), both precursors of Burns in his peculiar vein. See the selections in Ward's *English Poets*, vol. iii., and Minto's *The Historical Relationships of Burns*, in his *Lit-*

erature of the Georgian Era. Over the neglected grave of Fergusson, Burns raised a stone, bearing the lines :

" No sculptured marble here, nor pompous lay,
No storied urn or animated bust ;
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust."

7 21. *Sir Hudson Lowe.* A British general, governor of the island of St. Helena during Napoleon's captivity, 1815–1821. "*Amid the melancholy main.*" Quoted from Thompson's *Castle of Indolence*, XXX.

7 35. "*Eternal Melodies.*" Evidently, from other passages in Carlyle, a quotation from the German.

8 21. *The "Daisy."* Referring to one of Burns's most famous poems. *Ruined nest*, etc. (8 22). Referring to the characteristic verses *To a Mouse.* Both poems are printed below.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

(*On turning one down with the plough in April*, 1786.)

WEE, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour ;
For I maun [1] crush amang the stoure [2]
Thy slender stem :
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' speckl'd breast,
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting North
Upon thy early, humble birth ;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

[1] Dust.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's [1] maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield [2]
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie [3] stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share up-tears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'ry's brink,
Till wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He, ruin'd, sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's plough-share drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

[1] Walls. [2] Shelter. [3] Dry.

TO A MOUSE.

(On turning her up in her Nest, with the Plough, November, 1785.)

Wee, sleekit,[1] cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bick'ring brattle![2]
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle.[3]

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which maks thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal.

I doubt na, whyles,[4] but thou may thieve:
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker[5] in a thrave,[6]
'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessing wi' the lave,[7]
And never miss 't.

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big[8] a new ane,
O' foggage[9] green!
An' bleak December's win's ensuin',
Baith snell[10] and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
And weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till, crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

[1] Sleek. [2] With racing hurry
[3] Plough-staff. [4] Once in a while.
[5] *Daimen*, now and then; *icker*, ear of corn.
[6] Twenty-four sheaves of grain.
[7] The rest. [8] Build. [9] Aftermath. [10] Bitter.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble !
Now thou 's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But [1] house or hald,[2]
To thole [3] the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch [4] cauld !

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,[5]
In proving foresight may be vain :
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,[6]
An lea'e us nought but grief and pain
For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me !
The present only toucheth thee :
But, och ! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear !
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear.

8 24. "*Hoar visage*" *of Winter*. Apparently quoted (from memory) from an expression used in a letter of Burns's to Miss Kennedy (1785).

8 28. *He loves to walk in the sounding woods*, etc. This expression and the following quotation is evidently adapted from a passage in an extract from one of Burns's letters, quoted by Lockhart.

8 29. *Him that walketh on the wings of the wind. Psalm* civ. 3.

8 35. *Nut-brown*. A favorite epithet of English poets for a brunette, from the days of the old ballads down. The most famous use is in a charming folk-song of the fifteenth century, the basis of a longer poem by Prior (*Henry and Emma*), in which the nut-brown maid is the very ideal of constant and unselfish affection.

9 3. *Arcadian*. Arcadia, in the heart of the Peloponnesus, almost surrounded by mountains, was proverbial for its rural simplicity. The poets have pictured, in later times, "an ideal

[1] Without. [2] Endure. [3] Alone.
[4] Hold, home. [5] Hoar frost. [6] Off the right line, askew.

Arcadia—the home of piping shepherds and coy shepherdesses, where rustic simplicity and plenty satisfied the ambition of untutored hearts, and where ambition and its crimes were unknown." For a sketch of the rise in modern literature of this ideal Arcadia, see Mahaffy's *Rambles and Studies in Greece.*

11 26. " Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi "—If you wish me to weep, you must first mourn yourself. *Ars Poetica*, 102.

12 27. *Strong waters.* An old phrase for distilled liquors.

12 29. *Harolds.* Harold was the romantic hero of Byron's *Childe Harold. Giaours.* " Giaour " (pronounced *Jowr*, to rhyme with " bower ") is an Italianized form of the Turkish word meaning " infidel," *i. e.*, any person not a Mohammedan by faith, and particularly a European or Christian. The reference is to another poem by Byron entitled *Giaour*, the hero of which was known by the same name.

14 5. *Shakspeare . . . the sheerest bombast.* For an example of this, see *Macbeth*, Act I., Scene ii., lines 56 ff., and the comment on them in Professor Manly's edition in this series.

14 25. *Mrs. Dunlop.* " His little volume [the first edition of his poems, 1786] happened to attract the notice of Mrs. Dunlop of Dunlop, a lady of high birth and ample fortune, enthusiastically attached to her country, and interested in whatever appeared to concern the honor of Scotland. This excellent woman, while slowly recovering from the languor of an illness, laid her hands accidentally on the new production of the provincial press, and opened the volume at the *Cotter's Saturday Night.*" She read it over and over with the greatest pleasure and surprise, and " instantly sent an express to Mossgiel, distar . sixteen miles from her residence, with a very kind letter to Burns." Burns " acknowledged the favor conferred upon him in an interesting letter, still extant; and, shortly afterwards, commenced a personal acquaintance with one that never afterward ceased to befriend him to the utmost of her power. His letters to Mrs Dunlop form a very large proportion of all his subsequent correspondence ; and, addressed, as they were, to a person whose sex, age, rank, and benevolence inspired at once profound respect and a graceful confidence, will ever remain the most pleasing of all the materials of our poet's biography."—LOCKHART.

The following was his last letter to Mrs. Dunlop, written only a few days before his death :

Brow, Saturday, 12th July, 1796.

MADAM: I have written you so often, without receiving any answer, that I would not trouble you again, but for the circumstances in which I am. An illness which has long hung about me, in all probability will speedily send me beyond that *bourne whence no traveller returns*. Your friendship, with which for many years you honored me, was a friendship dearest to my soul. Your conversation, and especially your correspondence, were at once highly entertaining and instructive. With what pleasure did I use to break up the seal! The remembrance yet adds one pulse more to my poor palpitating heart. Farewell!!!

R. B.

15 4. *Rose-coloured novels and iron-mailed epics.* The novels to which Carlyle refers are probably of the sort represented by some of Maria Edgeworth's, which have their well-known descendants in the Sunday-school literature of our day; the epics are of the extravagant and violent kind that Southey wrote.

15 6. *Somewhere nearer to the Moon.* And therefore crazy, moonstruck, the allusion seems to be.

15 7. *Virgins of the Sun*, etc. Alluding to poems like Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, and to Scott's and Cooper's novels.

15 17. *Vates.* Latin, meaning poet; or literally, prophet, foreteller.

15 20. *Delphi.* A town in Greece, near the Corinthian Gulf, and at the foot of Mt. Parnassus, the fabled home of the Muses. It was the seat of the famous oracle of Apollo.

16 24. *Minerva Press.* A printing house in London, noted in the eighteenth century for the publication of trashy, sentimental novels for the circulating libraries.

16 31. "*Elder dramatists.*" The Elizabethan dramatists, for instance, whose poetic diction is celebrated.

17 4. *Dan to Beersheba.* Respectively the most northern and the most southern cities of Palestine. Hence the meaning of the phrase, from one end of the land to the other.

17 13. *Borgia.* A powerful Italian family of the fifteenth century, celebrated for its ability and for its monstrous crimes. The most noted Borgia, to whom Carlyle probably alludes, was Cæsar, handsome, brave, and accomplished, but stained with almost inconceivable perfidy and crime. *Luther.* The leader of the German Reformation. He was a man of extremely passionate

nature, and made no concealment of his righteous indignation at the excesses of the Roman Church.

17 16. *Mossgiel and Tarbolton.* See Introduction, iv.

17 17. *Crockford's.* A famous and fashionable gambling-house in London.

17 18. *Tuileries.* A royal residence adjoining the Louvre in Paris. It was burned by the Commune in 1871.

18 1. *The Wounded Hare*, etc. Referring to Burns's sympathetic "verses on seeing a wounded hare limp by me, which a fellow had just shot at."

18 4. *Halloween*, etc. Referring to one of Burns's most celebrated and characteristic poems, *Halloween*, which describes vividly and in racy dialect the merry consulting of the fates by country lads and lassies on that night.

18 5. *Druids.* The priests or ministers of religion among the ancient Celts of Gaul, Britain, and Ireland. *Theocritus.* A famous Greek idyllic poet of the third century B. C. *No Theocritus* here means "no poet of country life."

18 7. *Holy Fair* was the name given in the west of Scotland to a summer gathering of the country people for the purpose of receiving the sacrament. It was the subject of one of Burns's most telling satirical poems. It was at the invitation of *Fun*, and in company with *Superstition and Hypocrisy*, that the poet feigns to have journeyed to the Fair. *Council of Trent.* A famous council of the Roman Catholic Church held at Trent, in the Tyrol, beginning in 1545. It condemned the principal doctrines of the Reformation. *Roman Jubilee.* A festal year in the Roman Catholic Church, occurring every twenty-five or fifty years, in which remission of the penal consequences of sin is granted to those who repent and perform a pilgrimage to Rome, or certain other acts.

19 13. *Retzsch.* Moritz Retzsch. A German etcher and painter (1779–1857), best known for his illustrations of Goethe and Schiller.

19 20–30. *Fell*, keen ; *doure*, stern ; *lift*, sky; *ae*, one ; *burns, etc.*, streams with snowy wreaths choked up ; *bocked*, vomited.

20 6. *Auld Brig.* See Burns's poem, *The Brigs of Ayr*, an imaginary dialogue between the old and the new bridges across the Ayr, in the town of Ayr.

20 7–20 *Thowes*, thaws ; *snaw-broo*, literally snow-broth, *i.e.*, melted snow ; *speat*, flood ; *Glenbuck*, the source of the river ; *Rattonkey*, a small landing place near the mouth of the river ; *Deil nor ye never rise!* In the devil's name, may you never rise. The Old Bridge, which is supposed to be speaking, despises the new-fangled architecture of its more modern neighbor. *Gumlie jaups*, muddy waves or splashes.

20 21. *Poussin.* Nicolas Poussin, a noted French historical and landscape painter (1594–1665).

20 25, 26. "*Farmer's*" . . . "*Auld Mare.*" Referring to Burns's touching verses, *The Auld Farmer's New Year Morning Salutation to his Auld Mare Maggie.*

20 27, 28. *Homer's Smithy of the Cyclops.* The smithy of the Cyclops was the spot, Mt. Etna or elsewhere, at which these one-eyed Titans forged Zeus's thunderbolts; but Carlyle perhaps refers to the charming story of Odysseus and Polyphemus, the sheep-raising and man-eating giant, in the ninth book of the Odyssey. For the *yoking of Priam's chariot*, see the *Iliad*, Book xxiv., in Pope's translation, Maxwell and Chubb's edition of which is in this series.

20 28. "*Burn-the-wind.*" "Burnewin" (Burn-the-wind) is a vivid Scotch expression for "blacksmith." In a poem entitled *Scotch Drink*, Burns lauds the virtues of all Scotch liquors, and gives a vivid picture of a blacksmith, his brawny customers, and his foaming draught of ale for refreshment in the intervals of labor:

"When Vulcan gies his bellows breath,
An' ploughmen gather wi' their graith,[1]
O rare ! to see thee fizz an' freath[2]
I' th' lugget caup ![3]
Then Burnewin comes on like death
At ev'ry chaup.[4]

"Nae mercy, then, for airn or steel ;
The brawny, bainie,[5] ploughman chiel,
Brings hard owre hip, wi' sturdy wheel,
The strong forehammer,
Till block an' studdie[6] ring and reel
Wi' dinsome clamour."

[1] Tackle, gear. [2] Froth. [3] Handled cup. [4] Chop, stroke. [5] Bony. [6] Anvil.

20 35. *Fabulosus Hydaspes.* Carlyle calls attention to the parallelism between Burns's *haunted Garpal* and Horace's somewhat similar expression (*Odes*, I., xxii., 7, 8) with regard to the Hydaspes, the river between the Indus and the Ganges, which was the eastern limit of Alexander's conquests. *Fabulosus* means "storied." Compare Milton's *Il Penseroso*, line 159.

21 12, 13. *Richardson.* Samuel Richardson (1689–1761), author of *Pamela*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Sir Charles Grandison*, novels dealing largely with domestic life, and notable for their minuteness and (to us) prosiness of treatment. They were, however, exceedingly popular in their day, and have remained classics. *Defoe.* Daniel Defoe (1661–1731), author of *Robinson Crusoe*, *Journal of the Plague Year*, etc., the first great English novelist, famous also for his minute, though more realistic, method of narrative.

21 30. *Red-wat-shod.* "Ret-wet-shod," with bloodstained feet.

22 2. *Professor Stewart.* Dugald Stewart (1753–1828), a celebrated Scottish philosopher, long professor in the University of Edinburgh. See **45** 3.

22 12. *Keats.* John Keats (1795–1821), a really great English poet, the author of the *Eve of St. Agnes*, *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, and other beautiful lyrics, which the student should read again and again. Carlyle and others have judged him harshly, holding his exquisite sensitiveness to beauty for mere weakness.

22 20. *The Hell of Dante.* Hell is vividly pictured in Dante's *Inferno*, the first part of his *Divine Comedy*.

22 26. "*Novum Organum.*" The chief philosophic work of Francis Bacon, in which he sets forth his "new method" of scientific investigation. Since Carlyle wrote, much labor has been expended by certain writers in endeavoring to show just the reverse of Carlyle's statement; namely, that Bacon showed an understanding that could and did indite Shakspere's plays.

23 14. *In the passage above quoted.* Evidently in a part of the passage which Carlyle omits.

23 16. *The doctrine of association.* The psychological reason for the very familiar phenomenon of which Burns shows his appreciation below (paragraph 23).

23 20 *ff.* The extract is from a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated "New-year-day Morning, 1789."

25 3–13. From *A Winter Night*, the first two stanzas of which were quoted on page 19. *Ourie*, shivering or drooping; *brattle*, race or attack; *lairing*, wading, sinking; *sprattle*, scramble; *scaur*, cliff; *ilk*, every; *chittering*, shivering, trembling.

25 21–26. The closing stanza of the *Address to the Deil*. *Nickie-ben*. *Nickie* is, of course, Old Nick. *Ben* is not easily explicable, but evidently implies intimacy, as in several Scotch phrases (*cf.* "Jenny brings him *ben*," *Cotter's Saturday Night*), in which it is equivalent to *within*, *i. e.*, the living-room of the house. *Wad*, would; *men'*, mend; *aiblins*, perhaps; *dinna ken*, do not know; *stake*, chance (?); *wae*, sad, sorrowful.

25 27, 29. *Dr. Slop*. *Uncle Toby*. Whimsical characters in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.

25 32. *Indignation makes verses*. *Facit indignatio versus.*— Juvenal.

26 7. *Johnson*. Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709–1784), the famous English lexicographer, essayist, and poet. Boswell, in his *Life of Johnson*, reports him as saying, "Sir, I like a good hater."

26 22. *Furies*. In Greek mythology the Erinyes or Eumenides were female deities, avengers of iniquity. Æschylus, the greatest of the Greek tragic poets, introduced a chorus of Furies in the *Eumenides*, one of his tragedies.

26 23. *Darkness visible*. *Paradise Lost*, i., 62.

26 26–31. The opening of Burns's bitter *Ode, Sacred to the Memory of Mrs. Oswald*. It will perhaps require a second reading to catch the sense. *Who* refers to the object of *mark: mark* (*her*) *who*. *Noosing* is tying lightly, or, perhaps, nursing. The lady addressed was, as the ode goes on to show, avaricious to the last degree.

26 32. "*Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled.*" The first line of Burns's *Bannockburn: Robert Bruce's Address to his Army*, so justly celebrated a song that the student should not omit this opportunity to become familiar with it:

> Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled;
> Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
> Welcome to your gory bed,
> Or to victorie.

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's pow'r—
Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor-knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or free-man fa'?
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do, or die!

26 34, 35. *This dithyrambic was composed on horseback. Cf.* Professor Lovett's edition of *Marmion*, in this series, Introduction, p. xx., for a similar fact in regard to Scott's composition of *Marmion*.

27 12. "*Macpherson's Farewell.*" James Macpherson was a noted Scotch freebooter, a man of very unusual physical strength, and a skilful performer on the violin. He was finally captured, tried, and condemned to death in the year 1700. While in prison awaiting execution he composed a song, beginning:

"I've spent my time in rioting,
Debauched my health and strength;
I squandered fast as pillage came,
And fell to shame at length.

But dantonly and wantonly,
And rantonly I'll gae ;
I'll play a tune, and dance it roun',
Beneath the gallows tree."

Under the gallows he played the tune on his violin, and then offered the instrument to any friend who would come forward and accept it at his hands. No one offering, he angrily broke the violin on his knee and threw away the pieces. Then he submitted to his fate. Burns's verses were intended to be an improvement on Macpherson's, and to be sung to the same air. They begin :

" Farewell, ye dungeons dark and strong,
The wretch's destinie !
Macpherson's time will not be long,
On yonder gallows-tree.

CHORUS.

" *Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,*
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;
He play'd a spring and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree."

27 15. *Cacus.* The plundering monster of the Aventine whom Hercules slew. *Sturt*, struggle.

27 25. *Thebes, and in Pelops' line.* Compare Milton's lines—*Il Penseroso*, 97–100:

" Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine."

The allusion is to the Greek tragedies, the three most popular subjects of which were Œdipus, King of Thebes, Pelops and their respective houses, and the various heroes of the Trojan war.

27 26. *Material Fate.* The dominant idea in Greek tragedy is that of an overpowering fate, against which man struggled, only to be overwhelmed at last.

28 12. "*Address to the Mouse.*" See 8 22–24, and note. *The* "*Farmer's Mare.*" See **20** 26, and note.

28 13. "*Elegy on poor Mailie.*" A humorous lament on the death of a pet sheep of which Burns was very fond, beginning:

"Lament in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose;
Our Bardie's[1] fate is at a close,
Past a' remead;
The last sad cap-stane of his woes;
Poor Mailie's dead!

"It's no the loss o' warl's gear,
That could sae bitter draw the tear,
Or mak our Bardie, dowie,[2] wear
The mourning weed:
He's lost a friend and neibor dear,
In Mailie dead.

"Thro' a' the toun she trotted by him;
A lang half-mile she could descry him;
Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi' speed:
A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him
Than Mailie dead."

28 15. *Sterne.* Laurence Sterne. The celebrated English novelist and humorist (1713–1768), author of *Tristram Shandy*, and *The Sentimental Journey*, for whose whimsical and kindly wit Carlyle had an especial admiration. See note on **25** 27.

28 26. *Tam o' Shanter.* A spirited, humorous narrative, scarcely appreciated by Carlyle, founded on a popular tradition of a drunken traveller who by chance sees a midnight carouse of witches and is pursued by them.

29 6. *Tieck.* Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853), a German poet and critic, spoken of elsewhere by Carlyle as "a true poet, a poet born as well as made." *Musäus.* Johann Karl August Musäus (1735–1787). His chief work was *Folk-Tales of the Germans.* Carlyle says: "He attempts not to deal with the deeper feelings of the heart. . . . Musäus is, in fact, no poet."

29 28. *The Jolly Beggars.* A rollicking *cantata*, dealing with

[1] *Bardie*, bard. [2] Worn with grief.

the carouse of certain "Jolly Beggars" on a winter night. Several of the *dramatis personæ* are mentioned below: a "*raucle carlin*" (sturdy crone), who sang the praises of her jail-bird husband; a "*wee Apollo*," a "pigmy scraper wi' his fiddle;" a "*Son of Mars*," a rascally old soldier; a *caird* (tinker), and *Poosie-Nansie* (Nancy), the mistress of the inn.

30 12. *Callets.* Loose women.

30 19. *Teniers.* A celebrated Flemish painter of the seventeenth century, who excelled in realistic representations of low life.

30 24. *The "Beggars' Opera."* An exceedingly popular piece of the early eighteenth century, written by John Gay, in parody of the Italian opera, which was just then coming into favor. The songs were set to popular tunes. The characters were pickpockets, highwaymen, and loose characters; and the whole was a satire on the political corruption of the time. *The "Beggars' Bush,"* a seventeenth century comedy, by Fletcher and others, of the contents of which the name is significant.

31 10. "*Persons of quality.*" Gentlemen or ladies, not common people.

31 12. *Ossorius.* Jeronymo Osorio (1506–1580), called "the Cicero of Portugal," because of the florid excellence of his Latin style. This judgment on the character of his writing is said to be adapted from Bacon.

31 19. *Limbo.* Usually the border-land of Hell, but here simply border-land.

31 28. *In the medium of Harmony.* Through the means of harmony. The thought is not precise.

32 15–19. *Willie brew'd a Peck o' Maut,*" etc. *Maut* is, of course, malt. Of the songs here referred to, *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled* has already been quoted (page 87), and *Auld Lang-syne* is too familiar to need quotation. *Willie brew'd a Peck o' Maut* is a favorite drinking song:

> "O Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,
> And Rob and Allan cam to see;
> Three blyther hearts that lee lang[1] night
> You wad na find in Christendie."[2]

[1] Livelong. [2] Christendom.

To Mary in Heaven was written in memory of his betrothed, Mary Campbell, "Highland Mary," who was seized with a malignant fever at Greenock, where she was waiting to join him and sail for the West Indies, and died before he could even hear of her illness. The beautiful opening lines, it is to be hoped, will lead the student to make himself familiar with the entire poem:

> "Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
> That lov'st to greet the early morn,
> Again thou usher'st in the day
> My Mary from my soul was torn."

Duncan Gray is a rollicking ballad, a good idea of the character of which may be obtained from the first stanza. The whole poem, however, is worth the student's looking up:

> "Duncan Gray came here to woo,
> Ha, ha, the wooing o't,
> On blythe Yule night when we were fou,
> Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
> Maggie coost[1] her head fu' high,
> Look'd asklent[2] and unco[3] skeigh,[4]
> Gart[5] poor Duncan stand abeigh;[6]
> Ha, ha, the wooing o't."

32 25. *Our Fletcher's aphorism.* Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun (1653–1716), a Scotch politician and political writer.

33 17. *Our Grays and Glovers.* Richard Glover (1712–1785) is perhaps now best known as the author of a spirited and once popular ballad, *Hosier's Ghost* (see Mr. Miller's edition of Southey's *Life of Nelson*, in this series, page 26, and Professor Cook's edition of Burke's *On Conciliation with America*, page 105). Gray is, of course, Thomas Gray, the author of the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard.*

33 22. *Goldsmith.* Oliver Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* and *Traveller* mark the beginning of the reaction from the pedantic and affected style of Pope and his followers.

[1] Cast.
[2] Aslant.
[3] Strangely.
[4] Proud.
[5] Made.
[6] At a shy distance.

33 23, 24. "*Rambler.*" A periodical on the plan of the *Spectator*, published by Dr. Johnson in 1750–1752. *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*, is a romance, the scene of which is nominally laid in Abyssinia. The tone of the story, however, is distinctively English.

33 29. *Geneva.* Switzerland has naturally been much under the influence of French, German, and Italian culture, and has produced little in literature that is characteristic and original.

33 32, 33. "*Spectators.*" See the Introduction to Lowell's edition of the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, in this series. *Good John Boston*, apparently Thomas Boston.

33 35—**34** 2. *Schisms in our National Church.* Dissensions in the Scottish Church during the eighteenth century, arising from differences in theology or from disputes as to whether the pastor of a church should be elected by civil or ecclesiastical authority. *Fiercer schisms in our Body Politic.* Between the Jacobites, the partisans of the Stuarts (from *Jacobus*, Latin for James, *i. e.*, James II., the deposed king), and the partisans of the Orange, and later the Hanoverian, dynasty.

34 5–23. *Kames.* Lord Kames, author of the *Elements of Criticism*, a learned work on æsthetics. *Hume* (David), the Tory historian of England, and a metaphysician of repute. *Robertson* (William), the author of the brilliant *History of the Emperor Charles V.*, and a *History of Scotland. Smith* (Adam), the celebrated founder of modern political economy, the author of the *Wealth of Nations. Racine*, the great French tragic poet. *Voltaire*, the great French critic, satirist, poet, and sceptic. *Batteux*, a less popular French writer on æsthetics, which was at that time a favorite subject of study in Scotland. *Boileau*, a famous French poet and critic, occupying much the same position that Pope held in England. *Montesquieu*, a noted French philosophical writer, who influenced greatly the thought of Europe in all branches of political science. *Mably*, another important French publicist. *Quesnay*, a French political economist. *La Flèche*, on the Loire, where Hume spent some years while engaged in philosophical writing.

35 18. *Propaganda Missionaries.* Missionaries under the supervision of the Roman Catholic Propaganda, or organization for the propagation of the faith.

36 3. *Happy-valley.* A reminiscence of *Rasselas*, in which the prince leaves his happy valley in Abyssinia out of discontent and curiosity, only to find the great world about more full of cares and perplexities than he had imagined.

36 8. *Mind.* Recollect. The verses are from his epistle *To the Guidwife of Wauchope House.*

36 14–16. *Thistle.* The Scottish emblem. *Bear.* Barley. *Weeding-clips.* In the best texts, "weeding-heuk," weeding-hook.

39 18. *The crossing of a brook.* Cæsar's crossing of the Rubicon.

39 35. *A "priest-like father."* See the *Cotter's Saturday Night.*

40 19, 20. *In glory and in joy*, etc. From Wordsworth's poem entitled *The Leech Gatherer.*

41 26. *Sharp adamant of Fate*, etc. The loadstone or magnetic mountain of the Arabian stories.

42 30, 31. *Hungry Ruin has him in the wind.* That is, Ruin, like a wolf, had him to windward, and could therefore follow his scent unerringly. In a long biographical letter (Aug. 2, 1787) to Dr. Moore, Burns quotes the same line, the source of which is not known to the present editor. The time to which Carlyle refers was that at which Burns, threatened with arrest on a charge that required him to give bonds for what was to him a considerable amount of money, was about to sail for the West Indies.

42 33, 34. *"The gloomy night is gathering fast."* The first line of his farewell to Scotland, written under the circumstances just mentioned, *The Bonnie Banks of Ayr*, the last four lines of which Carlyle goes on to quote.

43 18. *Rienzi.* See Bulwer Lytton's novel and Wagner's opera. Rienzi was a fourteenth century Italian patriot, who gained control of Rome, reviving the old title of Tribune of the People, but who lost himself and his cause by rash and arbitrary acts and mad excesses.

44 21, 22. *Mr. Walker's personal interviews with Burns.* See **2** 33, and Introduction, iv.

44 26, 27. *Virgilium vidi tantùm.* "I have at least seen Virgil." Ovid, *Tristia*, iv., 10, 51.

45 1. *Professor Ferguson's.* Adam Ferguson (1723–1816), professor of philosophy at Edinburgh.

45 2, 3. *Mr. Dugald Stewart.* See **22** 2.

45 6. *Bunbury's.* See *Dictionary of National Biography.*

45 19. *Langhorne's.* John Langhorne (1735–1779).

45 27, 28. *Mr. Nasmyth's picture.* See frontispiece.

45 34. *Douce gudeman.* Sober goodman.

46 23. *In malam partem.* In bad part, maliciously.

47 32. *Good Old Blacklock.* See Introduction, iv.

48 23. *Excise and Farm Scheme.* See Introduction, iv.

50 3. *Mœcenases.* Would-be patrons, like Mæcenas, the Roman statesman, who, through his friendship with Horace and Virgil, has gone down to posterity as the type of the wealthy, appreciative, and liberal patron.

51 10 ff. *Meteors of French Politics.* The Introduction, iv., gives the necessary explanation of the allusions on this page.

51 27. *They that are not without sin.* To what is the allusion?

52 20. *Lady Grizzel Baillie's.* See *Dictionary of National Biography.*

52 24. *Dowie*, sad; *bing*, heap.

53 34. *Swift's Epitaph.* Written by Swift himself.

55 26. "*Twice cursed.*" To what is the allusion?

56 32–34. *Shakspeare* made a fortune and lived a prosperous life, but his greatness was not generally recognized during his lifetime. *Butler.* See note on 1 2. *Cervantes*, the author of *Don Quixote*, was for years allowed to remain a slave in Algiers, and was several times imprisoned for debt.

56 35. *Gather grapes of thorns.* To what is the allusion?

57 1. *A fence and haws.* A hedge-fence and thorn (hawthorne) blossoms.

57 6. *Borough.* A district appointing a member of Parliament.

57 27. *The solemn mandate.* Where is it found?

57 31. *Fardels.* To what lines in *Hamlet* does Carlyle allude?

58 6. *Poison-chalice.* Referring to the cup of hemlock which Socrates was condemned to drink.

58 11–13. *Roger Bacon*, an English monk of the thirteenth century, an ardent student of the natural sciences, and a great investigator, was imprisoned because his scientific writings were deemed heretical. *Galileo* (1564–1642), the famous Italian scientist, the inventor of the telescope, was, for his advocacy of the Copernican theory that the sun, not the earth, was the centre of the planetary system, compelled by the Inquisition to abjure his heretical opinions, and sentenced to imprisonment. *Tasso* (1544

–1595), the author of the great Italian epic, *Jerusalem Delivered*, was confined in a mad-house for seven years, possibly for political reasons, though his mind was undoubtedly unsound. *Camoens* (1524?–1580), the great and unfortunate author of the Portuguese epic, *The Lusiads*.

58 14. *So "persecuted they the Prophets."* To what is the reference?

59 3. *Triumphed over Death, and led it captive.* To what is the allusion?

59 21. *Restaurateur.* Restaurant-keeper; that is, a mere furnisher of superficial comfort or entertainment.

60 14. *Locke.* John Locke (1632–1704), the celebrated English philosopher.

60 28. "*Araucana.*" A long Spanish epic of the sixteenth century, by Alonso de Ercilla, dealing with the Spanish expedition against Arauco, in Chili, in which the author took part, and during which he composed part of his poem under the circumstances to which Carlyle refers.

61 4, 5. "*Golden-calf.*" To what is the allusion?

61 32. *Rabelais.* François Rabelais (1495?–1553), the great French satirist and humorist, author of *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*.

62 25. *Jean Paul.* Johann Paul Friederich Richter (1763–1825), a celebrated German humorist and mystic, known best by his pseudonym, Jean Paul. Carlyle wrote two essays on him, translated passages from his works, refers to him repeatedly, was exceedingly fond of his whimsical style and humor, and was to no small degree influenced by it.

66 2. *Plebiscita.* The Latin word for the acts of the popular assembly; hence, popular judgments or decisions.

66 20. *Swifts and Rousseaus.* Jonathan Swift, the author of *Gulliver's Travels*, and Rousseau, the great French novelist and reformer of the eighteenth century, both led unhappy and unfortunate lives.

66 25. *Ramsgate.* A seaside watering-place in Kent, a popular resort for London excursionists. *Isle of Dogs.* A peninsula in the Thames, within the limits of London.

66 35. *Valclusa Fountain.* The fountain at Valclusa (Vaucluse, near Avignon, in Southern France) celebrated through the lyrics of Petrarch, the great Italian poet of the fourteenth century.

SELECTED POEMS

Poor Mailie's Elegy

77 9. *Dowie.* Worn with grief.
78 20. *Mense.* Discretion.
78 23. *Spence.* Inner room
78 25. *Howe.* Valley.
78 26. *Yowe.* Ewe.
78 27. *Knowe.* Hillock.
78 29. *Rowe.* Roll.
78 31. *Tips.* Rams.
78 32. *Ket.* Matted Fleece.
78 35. *Fleesh.* Fleece.
78 38. *Wanchancie.* Unlucky.
78 39. *Girn.* Grin.
79 45. *Croon.* Moan.

The Cotter's Saturday Night

79 10. *Sugh.* Rushing round.
80 21. *Stacher.* Stagger.
80 22. *Flichtering.* Fluttering.
80 28. *Belyve.* By and by.
80 30. *Ca'.* Drive.
80 30. *Tentie.* Heedful.
80 34. *Braw.* Handsome.
80 35. *Penny-fee.* Wages.
80 38. *Spiers.* Inquires.
80 40. *Uncos.* Strange things.
80 44. *Gars.* Makes.
80 48. *Eydent.* Diligent.
80 49. *Jauk.* Trifle.
81 62. *Hafflins.* Partly.
81 64. *Ben.* Into the room.
81 67. *Cracks.* Talks.
81 67. *Kye.* Cows.
81 69. *Blate.* Shamefaced.

81 69. *Laithfu'*. Bashful.
81 72. *Lave*. The rest.
82 92. *Parritch*. Porridge.
82 93. *Hawkie*. Cow.
82 94. *Hallan*. Partition wall.
82 96. *Weel-hain'd*. Carefully saved.
82 96. *Kebbuck*. Cheese.
82 96. *Fell*. Biting.
82 99. *Towmont*. Twelvemonth.
82 99. *Sin' lint was i' the bell*. Since flax was in the flower.
82 103. *Ha' Bible*. Hall Bible.
82 105. *Lyart haffets*. Gray temples.
82 107. *Wales*. Chooses.
83 113. *Beets*. Feeds.
83 138. "*Springs exulting on triumphant wing*." From Pope's *Windsor Forest*.
84 166. "*An honest man's the noblest work of God*." From Pope's *Essay on Man*.

A Bard's Epitaph

85 2. *Owre*. Over.
85 3. *Blate*. Shamefaced.
85 3. *Snool*. Cringe.
85 5. *Dool*. Sorrow.

To a Louse

86 1. *Ferlie*. Wonder.
86 3. *Strunt*. Strut.
87 9. *Fit*. Foot.
87 13. *Swith*. Quick.
87 13. *Haffet*. Temple.
87 15. *Sprattle*. Scramble.
87 20. *Fatt'rells*. Ribbon-ends.
87 26. *Grozet*. Gooseberry.
87 27. *Rozet*. Rosin.
87 28. *Smeddum*. Powder.
87 30. *Droddum*. Breech.
87 32. *Toy*. Cap.
87 33. *Aiblins*. Perhaps.

87 33. *Duddie.* Ragged.
87 34. *Wyliecoat.* Undervest.
87 35. *Lunardi.* A kind of bonnet.
88 40. *Blastie.* Shriveled dwarf.

I Love My Jean

88 1. *Airts.* Directions.
88 5. *Row.* Roll.
88 14. *Shaw.* Wooded dell.

Auld Lang Syne

89 4. *Syne.* Since.
89 9. *Braes.* Hillsides.
89 10. *Gowans.* Daisies.
89 13. *Paidl't.* Paddled.
89 13. *Burn.* Stream.
89 14. *Dine.* Midday.
89 17. *Fiere.* Friend.
89 19. *A right guid willie-waught.* A hearty draught.
89 21. *Pint-stoup.* Flagon.

John Anderson

90 1. *Jo.* Sweetheart.
90 2. *Acquent.* Acquainted.
90 4. *Brent.* Smooth.
90 5. *Beld.* Bald.
90 7. *Pow.* Head.
90 11. *Canty.* Pleasant.

Bonnie Doon

92 12. *Wistna.* Knew not.
93 19. *Staw.* Stole.

Flow Gently, Sweet Afton

93 1. *Braes.* Banks.
93 6. *Den.* Dell.
93 16. *Birk.* Birch.

Highland Mary

94 4. *Drumlie.* Muddy.

For a' That and a' That

96 8. *Gowd.* Gold.
96 10. *Hodden-gray.* A coarse cloth.
96 17. *Birkie.* Fellow.
96 20. *Coof.* Fool.
97 27. *Aboon.* Above.
97 28. *Fa'.* Claim.
97 36. *Gree.* Prize.

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